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THE CRUISE OF THE 'FROLIC.

THE

CRUISE OF THE 'FROLIC';

OR,

YACHTING EXPERIENCES

OF

BARNABY BRINE, ESQ., R.N.

38345

BY

WILLIAM H. G. KINGSTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE PIRATE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN," "A PLEASURE TOUR IN CANADA," "BLUE JACKETS," "PETER THE WHALER," "SALT WATER," "ERNEST BRACEBRIDGE," ETC. ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

SOME of the first pages of the following work appeared a few years ago in the "New Monthly Magazine," when my friend, the Editor, expressed himself highly pleased with them. They met also a warm reception from the readers of that long-established periodical, as likewise, in more senses than one, from my yachting acquaintance generally; one or two insisting that I had caricatured them, and talking of demanding satisfaction at the point of a sword, or at the muzzle of a pistol. I assured them then, as I do now, that, on the word of an officer and a gentleman, I had not the slightest intention of wounding the feelings of any human being; and I entreated their pardon, if in shooting at a venture I had hit an object at which I had taken no aim. Indeed, from the pleasure I was assured the commencement of my yachting adventures gave, I was induced to continue my narrative of those which

followed, and my Papers I have committed to a gentleman who, from his experience in literary matters, will, I hope, do them justice. He has also most generously offered to take all their faults and shortcomings of which I may have been guilty on his own shoulders.

In conclusion, I have again to assure my Readers that the characters whose originals are to be found are those of a few companions who were perfectly ready to sit for their portraits; and these following Papers will serve to recall to them the pleasant days we spent in good fellowship together. Should, however, any irritable gentleman who keeps a yacht not be content with the explanations I have given, I beg that he will address me at my residence, Marine Villa, Musselton, N.B., and I shall be ready to give him all the satisfaction he may demand.

BARNABY BRINE, R.N.

March, 1860.

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THE

CRUISE OF THE 'FROLIC.'

CHAPTER I.

A YACHTSMAN'S LAMENT.—THE 'FROLIC,' AND THE FROLICKERS.

WHAT yachtsman can ever forget the beautiful scene Cowes Roads presented on a regatta morning in the palmy days of the club, when the broad pennant of its noble commodore flew at the mast-head of his gallant little ship the 'Falcon,' and numberless beautiful craft, of all rigs and sizes, with the white ensign of St. George at their peaks, and the red cross and crown in their snowy burgees aloft, willingly followed the orders of their honoured leader? Then the red and blue flags, with various devices, since borne as the insignia of many successful competitors, were unknown; or the pennant so proudly shone pre-eminent, that their twinkling lights were completely eclipsed.

Then, from far and near, assembled yachts and pleasure-boats, of all degrees, loaded with eager passengers to witness *the* regatta; and no puffing, blowing, smoking, rattling steamers came to create discord on the ocean, and to interfere with the time-honoured monopoly of the wind in propelling vessels across the watery plain. Bad luck to the man whose impertinently-inquisitive brain could not let the lid of his tea-kettle move up and down at its pleasure without wanting to know the cause of the phenomenon! Worse luck to him who insisted on boiling salt water on the realms of Old Neptune! Stern enemy to the romance and poetry of a life on the ocean! Could you not be content to make carriages go along at the rate of forty miles an hour over the hard land, without sending your noisy, impudent demagogues of machines to plough up the waves of the sea, which have already quite enough to do when their lawful agitator thinks fit to exert his influence? Vile innovator! may your republican spirit attempt to cross the Styx in a craft no better fitted for the voyage than a half-penny Thames steamer! May you be as sick as a dog before you get half way over! May Old Charon be as drunk as a lord, and, lashing down the safety-valve, blow you up into the murky atmosphere ere you catch a glimpse of the Elysian fields! Avaunt!

the very thought of you and your misdeeds makes my head ache as much as the rattle of one of your own infernal screechers, with their ceaseless paddle, paddle, paddle, across the Bay of Biscay. But to return to Cowes, ere the sun of its glory had set. It was a work of no slight difficulty and risk to cruise in and out among the innumerable craft at anchor, and dodging about under sail, just when the yachts were preparing to start. I doubt whether many of your "turn-ahead and back her" mariners, with their chimney-sweep faces, would possess seamanship enough to perform the feat without fouling each other every instant. But there I am again, still harping on the smoke-jacks. Back, memory! back, once more to the days of my youth. Those were yachting days. The Solent sea was proud of her progeny; no long voyagers gadding off to distant realms, truants from their home, and leaving their honoured parent deserted and forlorn. The morning sun rose over the Nab, and descended behind the Needles, their snowy canvas still glistening in its beams. If they wished to cruise to the westward, the ebb enabled them to enjoy a view of Scratchell's Bay and Freshwater Gate, and the flood brought them back again in time for dinner, or at the latest for tea. When the Culver Cliffs and Shanklin they wished to view, with the first of the

flood they got under weigh, and, ere the ebb had ceased to make, they were again safe at their accustomed moorings, or, when rude gales agitated the water, snugly at anchor well up the tranquil harbour. But it is of the regatta I am treating. While afloat all was movement, gaiety, and excitement, there was not less animation on shore. The awning of the club-house shaded crowds of gay visitors; and on the broad esplanade in front of it were drawn up the carriages-and-four of the noble house of Holmes and those of Barrington and Simeon, with blood-red hands emblazoned on their crests; while, in like style, some might by chance come over from Appuldercombe, and others of equal rank from the east and the west end of the island; and thus, what with booths of gingerbread and bands of music, scarcely standing-room was to be found on the quays during the day, while every hotel and lodging was overflowing at night. And then the ball! What lofty rank—what a galaxy of beauty was to be seen there! And the fireworks! what a splutter—what a galaxy of bright stars they afforded! Alas! alas! how have they faded! how have they gone out! The pride of Cowes has departed—its monopoly is no more—its regattas and its balls are both equalled, if not surpassed, by its younger rivals! "Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis."

And yet, though I carry a different flag at my mast-head, I rejoice not at the change—I lament. The first day of the Cowes Regatta broke fair and lovely, then down came the rain in torrents to disappoint the hopes of the pleasure-seekers, like the clouds which at every turn beset our path in life; but again, as they do happily in our mortal course, the clouds passed away, and the sun shone forth bright, warm, and cheering; a light air sprang up from the west-ward, and the whole scene on shore and afloat looked animated, joyous, and beautiful. While the rain-drops were still hanging on the trees, a large party of ladies and gentlemen collected on the Yacht Club slip, by the side of which were two gigs, their fine manly crews with their oars in the air ready to receive them. Three or four servants followed, laden with cloaks and plaids, to guard against a repetition of the shower; and several white baskets, of no mean pro-portions, showed that delicacies were provided from the shore which might not be found afloat. Never was a merrier set of people collected together. Cheer-ful voices and shouts of laughter emanated from them on all sides.

"Who's for the first boat?" sung out Ned Hearty, the owner of the 'Frolic.' Ned had tried shooting, hunting, and every other amusement which the brain

of man has invented to kill time; and he was now trying yachting, which he seemed to enjoy amazingly, though practically he knew very little about it; but I never met a man, green from the shore, so 'cute in taking in the details of marine affairs. In a week he could box the compass, knew the names of all the sails and most of the ropes of his craft, and had a slight notion of steering, though I'll wager he never touched a tiller in his life before. "I say, old fellow," he continued, turning to me—I had joined him the day before, and had taken up my quarters on board for a spell—"do you take charge of the first gig, and see some of the ladies safe on board. Send her back, though, for the two boats won't hold us all, and the Cardiffs and Lorimer have not come down yet."

"Very well; I can stow four ladies and three gentlemen," I answered, stepping into the boat, and offering my hand to Miss Seaton, who was considered the belle of the party by most of the men—at all events, she was the most sought after, for she was that lovable thing, an heiress. She took her seat, and looked up with her soft blue eyes to see who was next coming.

"We'll go in the first!"—"We'll go in the first!" exclaimed the two Miss Rattlers, in one breath; and forthwith, without ceremony, they jumped into the

boat, disdaining my proffered aid. Fanny Rattler, the eldest, was dark, with fine flashing eyes and a *petite* figure; but Susan was the girl for fun. She had not the slightest pretension to beauty, of which she was well aware; but she did not seem to care a pin about it: and such a tongue for going as she had in her head! and what funny things it said!—the wonder was it had not worn out long ago.

"Who'll come next?" I asked. "Come, Miss May Sandon, will you?" She nodded, and gave her delicate little hand into my rough paw. She was one of three sisters who were about to embark. They were all fair, and very pretty, with elegant figures, and hair with a slight touch of auburn, and yet they were not, wonderful as it may seem, alike in feature. This made them more attractive, and there was no mistaking one for the other. The three gentlemen who presented themselves were Harry Loring, a fine, good-looking fellow, a barrister by profession, but briefless, and the younger son of Sir John and Lady Loring. He was a devoted admirer of Miss Seaton. The next was Sir Francis Futtock, a post-captain, and a right honest old fellow. "Here, I must go, to act propriety among you youngsters," he said, as he stepped into the boat. The third, Will Bubble, the owner of a small yacht called the 'Froth,' laid up that year for

want, as he confessed, of quicksilver to float her. Will, like many a man of less wisdom, had been, I suspect, indulging in railway speculations, and if he had not actually burnt his fingers, he had found his capital safely locked up in lines which don't pay a dividend. "Shove off!" was the word; and I, seizing the yoke-lines, away we went towards the 'Frolic.'

"I say, Sir Francis, take care they behave properly —don't discredit the craft," sung out her owner. "No flirtations, remember, till we get on board—all start fair."

"Hear that, young ladies," said Sir Francis, looking, however, at Miss Seaton, whereat a *soupçon* of rosy tint came into her fair cheek, and her bright eyes glanced at her own delicate feet, while Henry Loring tried to look nohow, and succeeded badly.

"I vote for a mutiny against such restrictions," cried Miss Susan Rattler. "I've no idea of such a thing. Come, Sir Francis, let you and I set the example."

The gallant officer, who had only seen the fair Susan two or three times before, stared a little, and laughingly reminded her that he, as a naval man, should be the last to disobey the orders of the commander-in-chief; "Though faith, madam," he added, "the temptation to do so is very great."

"There, you've begun already with a compliment, Sir Francis," answered Miss Susan, laughing; "I must think of something to say to you in return."

She had not time, however, before the whole party were put in terror of their lives by a large schooner-yacht, which, without rhyme or reason, stood towards the mouth of the harbour, merely for the sake of standing out again, and very nearly ran us down, as she went about just at the moment she should not. We did not particularly bless the master, who stood at the helm with white kid gloves on his hands, one of which touched the tiller, the other held a cambric handkerchief to his nose, the scent of which Bubble declared he could smell as we passed to leeward. Two minutes more took us alongside the 'Frolic.' She was a fine cutter of between ninety and a hundred tons: in every respect what a yacht should be, though not a racer; for Ned Hearty liked his ease and his fun too much to pull his vessel to pieces at the very time he most wanted to use her. She did not belong to the Cowes squadron; but Ryde owned her, and Ryde was proud of her, and the red burgee of the Royal Victoria Yacht Club flew at her mast-head. The water was perfectly smooth, so the ladies stepped on board without any difficulty, though the Miss Rattlers said they were awfully afraid of showing the heels of their boots. The gentlemen

were busily engaged in arranging the cloaks and cushions for the ladies, while the other boats were coming off. In the next came, under charge of Captain Carstairs, who was yachting regularly with Hearty, Mrs. Sandon and two more of her fair daughters. Mamma was a very amiable gentlewoman, and had been a brunette in her youth, not wanting in prettiness, probably.

Then came a Mrs. Skyscraper, a widow, pretty, youngish, that is to say, not much beyond thirty, and with a good jointure at her own disposal; and a very tall young lady, Miss Mary Masthead by name, a regular jolly girl though, who bid fair to rival the Rattlers. Then there was Master Henry Flareup perched in the bows, a precocious young gentleman, waiting for his commission, and addicted to smoking; not a bad boy in the main, however, and full of good-nature. Hearty himself came off last with what might be considered the aristocracy of the party—Lady and Miss Cardiff, Lord Lorimer, and the Honourable Mrs. Topgallant, and with them was young Sandon, an Oxonian, and going into a cavalry regiment. Her ladyship was one of those persons who look well and act well, and against whom no one can say a word; while Clara Cardiff was a general favourite with all sensible men, and even the women liked her; she

talked a great deal, but never said a silly thing, and, what is more, never uttered an unkind one. She was so incredulous, too, that she never believed a bit of scandal, and (consequently, or rather, for such would not in all cases be the *sequitur*) at all events she never repeated one. She was not exactly pretty, but she had a pair of eyes, regular sparklers, which committed a great deal of mischief, though she did not intend it; her figure was *petite* and perfect for her height, and she was full of life and animation. Mrs. Topgallant was proud of her high descent, and a despiser of all those who had wealth, the advantages arising from which they would not allow her to enjoy. It was whispered that her liege lord was hard up in the world—not a very rare circumstance now-a-days. I almost forgot Lord Lorimer. He was a young man—a very good fellow—slightly afraid of being caught, perhaps, and consequently very likely to be so. The Miss Sandons, in their quiet way, set their caps at him; Jane Seaton looked as if she wished he would pay her more attention; and Mrs. Skyscraper thought his title very pretty; but the Rattler girls knew that he was a cut above them; and Clara Cardiff treated him with the same indifference that she did the rest of the men. Such was the party assembled on board the 'Frolic.'

I have not yet described the 'Frolic,' which, as it turned out, was to be my home—and a very pleasant home, too, for many a month on the ocean wave; and yet she was well worthy of a description. She had the first requisite for a good sea-boat—great breadth of beam, with sharp bows, and a straightish stem. She had a slight sheer rising gently forward, a fine run, and a long counter. I hate a straight gunwale without any sheer, though many fast vessels of the present day have it. They put me in mind of a stiff beauty who can't dance the polka. Her bulwarks were of a comfortable height, and she was painted black outside; her copper, of its native hue, was varnished so as to shine like a looking-glass. Some people would have thought her deck rather too much encumbered with the skylights; but I am fond of air: provided there are ample means of battening them down in case of a heavy sea breaking on board, they are to be commended. A thorough draught can thus always be obtained by having the foremost and aftermost skylights open at the same time: in a warm climate, an absolute necessity. Besides her main cabin, she had five good-sized sleeping-cabins—a cabin for the master and chief mate, store-rooms, and pantries; a large fore cuddy for the men; and Soyer himself would not have despised the kitchen range. I might ex-

patiate on the rosewood fittings of her cabin, on the purity of her decks, on the whiteness of her canvas and ropes, on the bright polish of the brass belaying-pins, stanchions, davits, and guns, and on the tiller with the head of a sea-fowl exquisitely carved; but, suffice it to say, that even to the most fastidious taste, she was perfect in all her details. Before Hearty came down, I had engaged a crew for him, and as soon as he arrived on board, I mustered them aft in naval fashion. They were, truly, a fine-looking set of fellows as they stood hat in hand, dressed in plain blue frocks and trousers, the ordinary costume of yachtsmen, with the name of 'Frolic' in gold letters on the black ribbon which went round their low-crowned hats. The name of the master was Snow. He was a thorough sea-dog, who had spent the best part of his life in smuggling, but not finding it answer of late, had grown virtuous, and given up the trade. He was clean and neat in his person; and as he appeared in his gold-laced cap, and yacht-buttons on his jacket, he looked every inch the officer. Odd enough, the name of one of the other men was Sleet, so Carstairs chose to dub the rest, Hail, Ice, Frost, Rain, Mist, Thaw, and so on; while one of the boys always went by the name of Drizzle. Hearty had brought down his own man, but was very soon obliged to send him on shore

again; for John, though an excellent groom, proved a very bad sailor. Among other disqualifications, he was invariably sick, and could never learn to keep his legs. The first day we got under weigh, he caught hold of the swing table, and sent all the plates and dishes flying from it. After breakfast he hove overboard half a dozen silver forks and spoons when shaking the tablecloth; and as he went to windward, of course all the crumbs and egg-tops came flying over the deck. Indeed, it were endless to mention all the inexcusable atrocities poor John committed. On his retiring on sick-leave we shipped a sea-steward to serve in his stead, who, having been regularly brought up on board yachts, proved himself admirable in his department; but a more impudent rascal to all strangers whom he thought not likely to know his master I never met. Who can fail to look with pleasure at the mouth of the Medina on a fine summer's day, filled as the roadstead is with numerous fine yachts, as well fitted to contend with the waves and tempests in a voyage round the world as the largest ship afloat!

The scenery itself is beautiful—a charming combination of wood and water. On one side, to the east, Norris Castle, with its ivy-crowned turrets and waving forest; on the other, the church-spire peeping amid

the trees; and that pretty collection of villas climbing the heights, and extending along the shore from the Club-house and Castle to Egypt Point, with the fine wild downs beyond. On the opposite coast the wooded and fertile shores of Hampshire; the lordly tower of Eaglehurst, amid its verdant groves; and Calshot Castle on its sandy beach, at the mouth of the Southampton Water; while far away to the east are seen, rising from the ocean, the lofty masts and spars of the ships-of-war at Spithead, and the buildings in the higher parts of Ryde; altogether forming a picture, perfect and unrivalled in its kind. Osborne—fit abode of Her Majesty of England—has now sprung up, and added both dignity and beauty to the scene.

CHAPTER II.

TREATS OF THE REGATTA AND DINNER ON BOARD THE 'FROLIC.'

"WHAT shall we do? Which way shall we go?" was the cry from all hands.

"Accompany the yachts to the eastward, and haul our wind in time to be back before the flood makes," was Will Bubble's suggestion, and it was approved of and acted on.

We watched the yachts starting, and a very pretty sight it was; but I have not the slightest recollection of their names, except that they were mostly those which had sailed before at Ryde. It is the *tout ensemble* of a regatta which makes up the interest: the white sails moving about, the number of craft dressed out with gay colours, the bands of music, the cheers as the winners pass the starting vessel, the eagerness of the men in the boats pulling about with orders, the firing of guns, the crowd on shore, the noise and bustle; and yet no dust, nor heat, nor odours disagreeable as at

horse-races, where abominations innumerable take away half the pleasure of the spectacle. A gun was fired for the yachts to take their stations and prepare; a quarter of an hour flew by—another was heard loud booming along the water, and up went the wide folds of canvas like magic—mainsail, gaff-topsail, foresail, and jib altogether. A hand ran aloft to make fast the gaff-topsail-sheet the moment the throat was up, and while they were still swaying away on the peak.

Every man exerts himself to the utmost—what muscular power and activity is displayed! There is not one on board who is not as eager for victory as the owner. What a crowd of canvas each tiny hull supports. What a head to the gaff-topsail, as long as that of the mainsail itself! And then the jib, well may it be called a balloon; it looks as if it could lift the vessel out of the water and carry her bodily along—it can only be set when she is going free; another is stopped along the bowsprit ready to hoist as she hauls close up to beat back. Huzza! away glide the beautiful beings—they look as if they had life in them; altogether, not two seconds' difference in setting their sails—a magnificent start! This beats the turf hollow: no slashing and cutting the flanks of the unfortunate horses, no training of the still more miserable jockeys; after all of which, you see a flash of yellow, or green,

or blue jackets, and in a few minutes everything is over, and you hear that some horse has won, and some thousands have slipped out of the hands of one set of fools into those of another set, who, if wiser, are perhaps not more respectable. Now consider what science is required to plan a fast yacht, what knowledge to build her, to cut and fashion her canvas—to rig her. What skill and hardihood in master and crew to sail her. What fine manly qualities are drawn out by the life they lead. Again I say Huzza for yachting!

Away glided the 'Frolic' from her moorings, as the racing yachts, accompanied with a crowd of others, ran dead before the wind to the eastward through Cowes Roads. The whole Channel appeared covered with a wide spread of canvas, as we saw them stem on with their mainsails over on one side, and their immense square sails boomed out on the other. Everybody on board was pleased, some uttered loud exclamations of delight, even the Miss Sandons smiled. They never expressed their pleasure by any more extravagant method; in fact, they were not given to admiration, however willing to receive it.

I wish two persons to be noted more particularly than the rest—our hero and heroine; for what is a story, however true, without them? They were to be seen at the after-part of the vessel—the one, the fair

Jane Seaton, sitting on a pile of cushions, and leaning against the side, while Harry Loring, the other, reclined on a wrap-rascal at her feet, employed in looking up into her bright blue eyes, as she unconsciously pulled to pieces a flower he had taken out of his button-hole and given her.

"Wouldn't it be delightful to take a cruise to the Antipodes?" he asked.

"Yes," she answered.

"Just as we are now," he added, "with such a heaven above me." He looked meaningly into her blue eyes.

Sweet Jane blushed, as well she might. What more in the same style he said I don't know, for as she bent her head down, and he put his face into her blue hood, not a word reached me. By-the-by, all the ladies wore blue silk hoods, formed after the model of the front of a bathing-machine, and they were considered admirable contrivances to help a quiet flirtation, as in the present instance, besides aiding in preserving the complexion.

Hearty was rather bothered, I fancied. He liked to be making love to somebody, he declared, and Jane Seaton appeared to be a girl so much to his taste, that, as he confessed, he felt rather spooney on her, and had almost made up his mind to try his luck. Foolish

Jane! Here was ten thousand a year ready to throw himself at your feet instead of the penniless youth who had so easily placed himself there. How you would have kicked had you known the truth!

"I say, Hearty, can't you find something for all these young people to do to keep them out of mischief?" sung out Sir Francis. "Remember the proverb about idleness. I tremble for the consequences."

"Fie! fie!" said Mrs. Skyscraper.

"Fie! fie!" echoed Mrs. Topgallant; "I'm ashamed of you."

"We'll try what can be done, Sir Francis," answered Hearty. "Can you, Bubble, devise something?"

"I have it," replied Will; "tablecloths, napkins, towels, and all sorts of household linen came on board yesterday at Portsmouth unhemmed, so I laid in a supply of needles and thread this morning on purpose for the present emergency."

The rogue had put Sir Francis up to making the observation he had done. In a few minutes a number of rolls of various sorts of linen were brought on deck. Some of the damsels protested that they had no needles, and couldn't work and wouldn't work, till Sir Francis slyly suggested that it was a trial to see who would make the most notable wife; and without another

objection being offered, all the fair hands were employed in sewing away at a great rate, the gentlemen, meantime, holding their parasols to shade them from the sun. Carstairs was the only exception. He slyly went forward, and, taking out pencil and paper, made a capital sketch of the various groups, under which he wrote, "All for Love," and headed "Distressed Needlewomen;" much to the scandal of those who saw it.

The ladies, old and young, soon got tired of doing anything, and the announcement that dinner would be ready as soon as the company were, was received with evident signs of satisfaction. Hearty was a sensible fellow, and determined to get rid of all bad London habits, so we dined early on board; and then when we got back to port in the evening we used generally to repair to the house of one or other of the guests, and enjoy a meal called by some a glorious tea, by others a yachting tea—in fact, it was something like the supper of our ancestors, with tea and coffee. It mattered, therefore, nothing to us whether we got back at eight, nine, or ten; no one waited dinner for us; indeed, Hearty never would undertake to get back in time. I should advise all yachting people to follow the good example thus set them.

By general acclamation it was determined that we

should dine on deck; and Sir Francis, Bubble, and some of the more nautical gentlemen, set to work to rig tables, which we accomplished in a very satisfactory manner, and never was a better feast set before a more hungry party of ladies and gentlemen. Champagne was the favourite beverage; and certainly Hearty did not stint his friends in it, though there was no lack of less refined liquors. Sir Francis, of course, proposed the health of Ned Hearty; "and may there soon be a Mrs. Hearty to steady the helm of the 'Frolic'!" were the last words of his speech.

Ned got up to return thanks. He looked at Jane Seaton, but she had the front of her bathing-machine turned towards Harry Loring, so did not see him. He made a long oration, and concluded by observing,

"How can there be any difficulty in following the advice my gallant friend Sir Francis Futtock has given me, when I see myself surrounded by so many angelic creatures, any of whom a prince might be proud to make his bride?"

Loud shouts of applause from the gentlemen—odd looks and doubtful smiles from the chaperones—blushes deep from the young ladies—each one of whom, who was not already in love, thought she should like to become Mrs. Hearty, provided Lord Lorimer did not ask her to become Lady Lorimer; while Henry

Flareup was discovered squeezing the hand of Miss Mary Masthead.

"Oh, that I were a prince, then!" whispered Loring into Miss Seaton's blue shade.

Thus passed on the day. If there was not much real wit there was a great deal of hearty laughter, and stores of health and good spirits were laid in for the future. Loring sang some capital songs, Carstairs spouted, and Bubble floated about, throwing in a word whenever he saw any one silent or looking as if about to become dull; while young Flareup, who was anxious to do his best, laughed loudly for want of any other talent to amuse the company. As the vessels came to haul their wind in order to save the tide back to Cowes, it was curious to observe how they appeared to vanish. One could scarcely tell what had become of the immense crowd we had just before seen astern of us. Scattered far and wide in every direction, there seemed not to be one quarter of the number which were before to be seen. We got back soon after eight o'clock, every one assuring Hearty that they had spent a most delightful day.

CHAPTER III.

A VOYAGE.—THE MARINERS' RETURN.

"I SAY, old fellows, don't you find this rather slow?" exclaimed Hearty, as one morning Carstairs, Bubble, and I sat at breakfast with him on board the 'Frolic.' "What say you to a cruise to the westward, over to the coast of France and the Channel Islands, just for ten days or a fortnight or so?"

"Agreed! agreed! agreed!" we all answered.

"Well, then, to-morrow or next day we sail," said Hearty. "But how can you, Carstairs, tear yourself away from your pretty widow? Bubble, you don't mean to say that you can leave sweet May Sandon without a sigh?"

"A little absence will try the widow; it will teach her to miss me, and she will value me more when I return," was Carstairs' answer. "But you, Bubble, what do you say?" for he did not answer.

Will was guilty of blushing, for I saw the rosy hue

appearing even through his sunburnt countenance, though the others did not.

"That is the best thing we can do," he answered, with a loud laugh: "Hurrah for the broad seas, and a rover's free life!"

"I thought so,—I thought there was nothing in it," said Hearty. "Happy dog!—you never fall in love; you never care for any one."

"Ah, no, I laugh, sing, and am merry!" exclaimed Bubble. "It's all very well for you fellows with your five or ten thousand a year to fall in love; you have hope to live on, if nothing else—no insurmountable obstacles; but for poverty-stricken wretches, like me and a dozen more I could name, it can only bring misery: yet, I don't complain of poverty—no cares, no responsibilities; if one has only one's self to look after, it matters little; but should one unhappily meet with some being who to one's eye is lovely, towards whom one's heart yearns unconsciously, and one longs to make her one's own, then one begins to feel what poverty really is—then the galling yoke presses on one's neck. Can you then be surprised that I, and such as I, throw care away, and become the light frivolous wretches we seem? Hearty, my dear fellow, don't you squander your money, or you will repent it!"

Bubble spoke with a feeling for which few would

have given him credit. He directly afterwards, however, broke into his usual loud laugh, adding,

"Don't say that I have been moralizing, or I may be suspected of incipient insanity."

"Will Bubble has made out a clear case that he cannot be in love, for no one accuses him of being overburdened with the gifts of fortune," I observed; for I saw that he was more in earnest than he would have wished to be supposed. "But, do you, Hearty, wish to desert Miss Seaton, and leave the stage clear for Loring?"

"Oh, I never enter the lists with a man who can sing," answered Hearty. "Those imitators of Orpheus have the same winning way about them which their great master possessed. But, at the same time, I'll bet ten to one that the fair Jane never becomes Mrs. Loring. I had a little confab the other day with Madame la Mère, and faith, she's about as fierce a she-dragon as ever guarded an enchanted princess from the attempts of knights-errant to rescue her."

"I'll take your bet, and for once stake love against lucre!" exclaimed Bubble, and the bet was booked.

But enough of this. We bade our friends farewell; and, in spite of all their attempts to detain us, we laid in a stock of provisions to last us for a month, and with a fine breeze from the northward, actually

found our way through the Needles just as the sun was tinging the topmost pinnacles of those weather-worn rocks.

As soon as we were through the passage, we kept away, and shaped a course for Havre de Grâce. The wind shifted round soon afterwards to the westward, and I shall not forget the pure refreshing saltness of the breeze which filled our nostrils, and added strength and vigour to our limbs. What a breakfast we ate afterwards! There seemed no end to it. Our caterer had done well to lay in a store of comestibles. Our perfect happiness lasted till nearly noon, and then the wind increased and the sea got up in a most unusual manner. We went below to take luncheon, and we set to in first-rate style, as if there was no such thing as the centre of gravity to be disturbed. Carstairs began to look a little queer.

"'Thus far into the bowels of the earth have we marched on without impediment,' Shakspeare, 'hum—'" he began. He was going to give us the whole speech, but instead, he exclaimed, "Oh, ye gods and little fishes!" and bolted up on deck.

Hearty, the joyous and free, followed. They declared that they felt as if the cook had mixed ipecacuanha in the sausages they had eaten for breakfast. Bubble laughed, lighted a cigar, and sat

on the companion-hatch with one leg resting on the deck, the other carelessly dangling down, with the independence of a king on his throne, pitying them. Oh, how they envied him; how they almost hated him, as cigar after cigar disappeared, and still there he sat without a sign of discomposure! At dark we made the Havre light, and an hour afterwards, the tide being high, we ran in and dropped our anchor in smooth water. Wonderful was the change which quietude worked on all hands!

"Supper, supper!" was the cry. Even Will and I did justice to it, though we had had a quiet little dinner by ourselves in the midst of our friends' agony, off pickled salmon and roast duck, with a gooseberry tart and a bottle of champagne.

Next morning we sailed with the wind back again to the north-east, and, notwithstanding the little inconveniences we had suffered on the passage across, we stood to the westward, and heroically determined to run through the Race of Alderney, to pay a visit to Jersey. There was a nice breeze, and I must say we were glad there was no more of it, as we ran through the passage between Alderney and the French coast. The water seemed possessed; it tumbled and leaped and twisted and danced in a most extraordinary and unnatural manner, and several seas toppled right

down on our decks, and we could not help fancying that some huge fish had jumped on board. However, with a fair wind and a strong tide we were soon through it, nor was there danger of any sort; but from the specimen we had we could judge what it would be in a strongish gale. The wind had got round to the southward of west, and before we had managed to weather Cape Gronez the tide turned against us. Cape Gronez is the north-west point of Jersey, and bears a strong similarity to the nose of Louis Philippe, as his portrait used to be represented in 'Punch.' We had an opportunity of judging of it, for, for upwards of an hour did we beat between it and those enticing rocks called very properly the Paternosters, for if a ship once strikes on them it is to be hoped that the crew, being Roman Catholics, will, if they have time, say their Paternosters before they go to the bottom.

At last, as it came on very thick, we ran back and anchored in a most romantic little cove called Bouley Bay, where we remained all night, hoping the wind would not shift to the northward, and send us on shore. I should advise all timid yachtsmen to keep clear of Jersey, for what with the rapid tides, and rocks innumerable, it is a very ticklish locality. The next morning we got under weigh at daybreak, and brought up off Elizabeth Castle, which guards the

entrance of the harbour of St. Heliers. I have not time to describe Jersey. I can only recommend all who have not seen it, and wish to enjoy some very beautiful scenery, to go there. Two days more saw us crossing to Torbay, which we reached on the morning of the regatta. Had an artist been employed to carve the cliffs on which Torbay is situated, he could scarcely have made them more picturesque, or added tints more suitable, except perhaps that they are a little more red than one might wish. However, it is a very beautiful place, and admirably adapted for a regatta.

The bay before the town was crowded with yachts, and I counted no less than fourteen large schooners, among which I remember the 'Brilliant,' which, however, should be called a ship, 'Gipsy Queen,' 'Dolphin,' 'Louisa,' and a vast number of cutters, a large proportion of which were gaily dressed up with flags. The course is round the bay, so that the yachts are in sight the whole time—an advantage possessed by few other places. The 'Heroine,' 'Cygnet,' and 'Cynthia' sailed, but the race was not a good one, as the 'Heroine,' driven to windward by her antagonist, ran her bowsprit into one of the mark boats, and another of them, the 'Cynthia,' making a mistake, did not go round her at all. Notwithstanding this, the sight was

as beautiful of its kind as I ever saw. There was a ball at night, to which we went, and we flattered ourselves that four dancing bachelors were not unwelcome. We met a number of acquaintances. Hearty lost his heart for the tenth time since he left London. The Gentle Giant, as the Miss Rattlers called Carstairs, looked out for a charmer, but could find none to surpass Mrs. Skyscraper. Bubble laughed with all but sighed with none, though Hearty accused him of flirtations innumerable; and I never chronicle my own deeds, however fond I may be of noting those of my friends. However, if we did not break hearts, we passed a very pleasant evening. Hearty invited everybody he knew to come on board the next morning, and we went as far as Dartmouth, and a beautiful sail back we had by moonlight, to the great delight of the romantic portion of the guests. They were a very quiet set of ladies and gentlemen, and more than one sigh was heaved when they had gone on shore for our fast friends at Cowes.

We were present at the Plymouth Regatta, and were going to several other places, when, one day after dinner, Hearty thus gave utterance to his thoughts. We were about a quarter of the way across channel on our passage to the French coast, with a stiffish breeze from the westward, and a chopping sea:—

"It seems to me arrant folly that we four bachelors

should keep turning up the salt water all the summer, and boxing about from place to place which we don't care to visit, when there are a number of fair ladies at Cowes who are undoubtedly pining for our return."

"My own idea," exclaimed Carstairs.

"Your argument is unanswerable," said Bubble.—I nodded.

"All agreed—then we'll up stick for the Wight," said Hearty, joyfully. "The wind's fair. We shall be there some time to-morrow. 'Hillo, Jack! beg the master to step below.'"

This was said to a lad who waited at table and assisted the steward.

Old Snow, the master, soon made his appearance. He had been a yachtsman for many years, and previously, if his yarns were to be believed, a smuggler of no mean renown. He was a short man, rather fat, for good living had not been thrown away on him, and very neat and clean in his person, as became the master of a yacht.

"We want to get back to Cowes, Snow," said Hearty.

"Yes, sir," answered the skipper, well accustomed to sudden changes in the plans of his yachting masters.

"How soon can we get there?" asked Hearty.

"If we keeps away at once, and this here wind

holds, early to-morrow; but, if it falls light, not till the afternoon, maybe; and, if it chops round to the eastward, not till next morning," replied Snow.

"By all means keep away at once, and get there as fast at you can," said Hearty; and the master disappeared from the cabin.

Directly afterwards we heard him call the hands aft to ease off the main sheet, the square-sail and gaff-topsail were set, and, by the comparatively easy motion, we felt that we were running off before the wind. Not a little did it contribute to our comfort in concluding our dinner.

The next day, at noon, saw us safely anchored in Cowes Roads.

"There's Mr. Hearty and the Gentle Giant, I declare," exclaimed the melodious voice of Miss Susan Rattler from out of a shrubbery, as my two friends were pacing along on the road towards Egypt, to call on Lady Cardiff.

"Oh, the dear men! you don't say so, Susan!" replied her sister.

Bubble and I were close under them, a little in advance, so they did not see us, though we could not avoid hearing what was said.

"Yes, it's them, I vow; we must attack them about the pic-nic forthwith," said Susan.

"Don't mention Jane Seaton, or poor Ned will be too much out of spirits to do anything," observed her sister.

"Trust me to manage all descriptions of he-animals," replied Rattler minima. "Ah, how d'ye do?—How d'ye do? Welcome, rovers, welcome!" she exclaimed, waving her handkerchief as they approached.

"Lovely ladies, we once more live in your presence," began Hearty.

"'Oh, that I were a glove upon that hand!'" shouted Carstairs,

"Oh, don't, you'll make us blush!" screamed Susan, from over the bushes. "But seriously, we're so glad you're come, because now we can have the pic-nic to Netley you promised us."

"I like frankness—when shall it be?" said Hearty.

"To-morrow, by all means—never delay a good thing."

"'If 'twere done, 'twere well 'twere done quickly,'" observed the captain.

"That's what Shakspeare says about a beef-steak," cried Susan. "But I say then, it's settled—how nice!"

"What? that we are to have beef-steaks?" asked Hearty. "They are very nice when one's hungry."

"No, I mean that we are to have a pic-nic to-morrow," said the fair Rattler.

"That depends whether those we invite are willing to join it," observed Hearty.

"'I can summon spirits from the vasty deep; but will they come, cousin?'" exclaimed Carstairs.

"Oh, yes, in these parts, often," cried Rattler maxima; "the revenue officers constantly find them, I know."

"Capital—capital!" ejaculated Hearty. "You must bring that out again on board the 'Frolic.' You deserve a pic-nic for it; it's so original. You must consider this only as a rehearsal."

"How kind—then it's all settled!" exclaimed both young ladies in a breath. "There's Mary Masthead, I know, is dying to go, and so is Mrs. Topgallant, and I dare say, if Captain Carstairs presses Mrs. Skyscraper, she'll go, and the Sandons and Cardiffs, and all our set; I don't think any will refuse."

"Well, then, we've no time to lose," we exclaimed, and off we set to beat up for recruits.

We were not, however, without our disappointments. Lady Cardiff could not go, and without a correct chaperone she could not let her daughter be of the party—the thing was utterly impossible, dreadfully incorrect, and altogether unheard of. Mrs. Skyscraper was a great deal too young, and being a widow, had herself to look after. If Mrs. Topgallant would go,

she would see about it; so we tried next to find the lady in question, but she had gone to Carisbrooke Castle, and would not be back till late. Mrs. Sandon was next visited, but she had a cold; and if Lady Cardiff would not let her daughter go without a chaperone, neither could she. We by chance met Mrs. Seaton with the fair Jane, looking very beautiful, but mamma never went on the water if she could help it. She could not come to the island without doing so; but once safe there, she would not set her foot in a boat till she had to go away again. Sooth to say, that was not surprising; the good dame was unsuited by her figure for locomotion. Everything depended on Mrs. Topgallant; never was she in so much request. The gentlemen being able to come without chaperones, more readily promised to be present. We fell in with Sir Francis Futtock, Lord Lorimer, Harry Loring, and young Flareup, and a young Oxonian, who had lately taken orders, and created a great sensation among the more sensitive portion of his audience by his exquisite preaching, and the unction by which he privately recommended auricular confession and penance.

The Rev. Frederick Fairfax was a pink-faced young man, and had naturally a round, good-natured countenance, but by dint of shaving his whiskers, elongating

his face, and wearing a white cravat without gills, and a stand-up collar to his coat, he contrived to present a no bad imitation of a Jesuit priest. The Miss Rattlers called him the Paragon Puseyite, or the P. P., which they said would stand as well for parish priest. How Hearty came to invite him I don't know, for he detested the worse than folly of those who try to make religion rest on a foundation of outward show and ceremony. We had just left the young gentleman when we met the two merry little Miss Masons. At first they could not possibly go, because they had no chaperone; but when they heard that the Rev. Frederick was to be of the party, all their scruples vanished. With such a pastor they might go anywhere. They had only lately been bitten, but had ever since diligently applied themselves to the study of the 'Tracts of the Times;' and though not a word did they understand of those works (which was not surprising, by-the-by), they perceived that the Rev. Fred's voice was very melodious, that he chanted to admiration, and looked so pious that they could not be wrong in following his advice. At last the hearts of all were made glad by the appearance of Mrs. Topgallant, who, without much persuasion, undertook to chaperone as many young ladies as were committed to her charge.

CHAPTER IV.

A PIC-NIC, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

THE morning came at last, fine as the palpitating hearts of expectant damsels could desire, and calm enough to please the most timid chaperone; so calm, indeed, that it was a question whether any craft with canvas alone to depend on could move from her moorings with a chance of going anywhere except to Hurst or the Nab; but, as few of our lady friends had any nautical knowledge, that in no way disconcerted them, and they would not have believed us had we assured them that there was too little wind for the excursion. By noon, however, a few cats' paws appeared on the lake-like surface of the water, and soon after the deck of the 'Frolic' once more began to rejoice in the presence of many of the former frolickers. They found it easy enough to come on board, but to collect all hands and get under weigh was a very different thing. The Miss Sandons and Jane Seaton, who

came escorted by Loring, on finding no chaperone, thought they ought to go on shore again, as neither Mrs. Topgallant nor Mrs. Skyscraper had come; but Sir Francis kept them discussing the point till Carstairs had time to dive below, and presently returned with a Norman cap on his head, a shawl over his shoulders, and a boat-cloak as a petticoat.

"There," he exclaimed, crossing his arms before him, and putting his head on one side, sentimentally, "I'm as good a duenna as Mrs. Topgallant, or any other lady of your acquaintance;" all laughed and forgot to go. "Come, my dear girls, sit down and behave yourselves; no flirting with that naval officer, if you please," he continued, imitating the honourable dame. "You, Mr. Loring, and you, Mr. Henry Flareup, go forward and smoke your cigars, I can't allow such nasty practices here."

Flareup had, as usual, lighted his weed, and was sending the smoke into the face of May Sandon. The roars of laughter were not few as the real Mrs. Topgallant, with Miss Mary Masthead, approached, and the Norman cap with the good-natured face of the wearer was seen looking over the side affectionately down upon them. The Rev. Fred and the Miss Masons next arrived, and lastly Mrs. Skyscraper, Miss Cardiff, Lord Lorimer, and Hearty.

"Now, remember, Mr. Hearty, we must get back before dark; it is on that condition alone that I have consented to chaperone these young ladies," said Mrs. Topgallant, as we were about to get under weigh.

"And I, also," exclaimed pretty Mrs. Skyscraper.

"Oh, we don't allow you to be a chaperone," said Carstairs; "you are far too young and too engaging," he whispered; and the Gentle Giant actually blushed as he said so; luckily Miss Susan Rattler did not hear him.

"And mamma made me promise to be back at eight," cried Jane Seaton.

"And so did ours!" echoed the three Miss Sandons.

"You know we could not have come at all unless we were certain of being at home in proper time!" exclaimed the two Miss Masons; "could we, Mr. Fairfax?"

The pet bowed and smiled. He was meditating on the Life of St. Euphemia of Rhodes, and did not hear the question.

"Remember, ladies, that time and tide wait for no man," answered Hearty. "Even such fair goddesses as honour the 'Frolic' by their presence this day cannot govern the winds and waves, however much they may everything else. Therefore all I can promise is, to do my best to follow the wishes of your amiable mammas, and of yourselves."

"And of mine, if you please, Mr. Hearty," put in Mrs. Topgallant.

"Certainly, my dear madam, I considered you among the goddesses of whom I was speaking," answered Hearty, with a flourish of his broad-brimmed beaver, which, with the compliment, completely won the honourable lady's heart.

The anchor was at last weighed, and it being fortunately slack tide, with a light air from the south-east, we were able to fetch Calshot Castle.

Most of my readers probably know the Southampton Water, and may picture us to themselves as we floated up the stream with the round, solid, Stilton-cheese-like-looking Castle of Calshot, at the end of a sandy spit, and the lordly Tower of Eaglehurst, rising among the trees visible over it on the one hand, and the mouth of the Hamble river on the other, while, as far as the eye can reach on either hand, are seen verdant groves, with the roofs and chimneys of numerous villas peeping from among them. About three quarters of the way up, on the right hand, at a short distance only from the water, stand the picturesque ruins of Netley Abbey. The jolly monks of old—and I respect them for it—always selected the most beautiful sites in the neighbourhood for their habitations, and in fixing on that for Netley, they did not depart from their rule.

Several chambers remain; and the walls which surround an inner court are entire, with fine arched windows, the tracery work complete, looking into it. We brought up off it, and the boats were instantly lowered to convey the passengers on shore. In getting into one of them, Loring nearly went overboard, and a shriek of terror from Jane Seaton would have published her secret had not everybody known it before. At last the hampers and the people reached the beach in safety; and now began the difficulties of the chaperone. She was like a shepherd with a wild flock of sheep and no dog: they would stray in every direction out of her sight. Some had brought sketch-books, and perched themselves about, far apart, to take views of the ruins; others preferred what they called exploring; and Jane and Loring vanished no one knew where. The Gentle Giant, who drew very well, was called on by the Miss Rattlers and several other ladies to fill up the pages of their books; and Hearty was running about talking to everybody and ordering everything; while Bubble was exerting himself to do the same, and to take sketches into the bargain, though all his friends observed that there was a want of his usual vivacity. The Rattler girls quizzed him unmercifully, till they brought him back to the semblance, at all events, of his former self.

The servants had been employed in laying the cloth under the shade of a tree which had sprung up in the courtyard, and thither Hearty's voice now summoned us. How can pen of mine do justice to the cold collation which was spread before our rejoicing eyes! I can only say that the party did it, and amply too.

"Are we all here?" exclaimed the master of the revels. "No, by Bacchus! two are wanting—Miss Seaton and Mr. Loring—where are they?"

"Good gracious! where can they be?" screamed the Honourable Mrs. Topgallant.

"What can have become of them?" cried Mrs. Skyscraper.

"They probably did not hear you call, and I dare say they are not far off," suggested Miss Cardiff, always anxious to find a good excuse for her acquaintance.

"I should not wonder but what they have eloped," observed Miss Susan Rattler.

"What fun!" said Miss Mary Masthead; "we haven't had such a thing for a long time."

"How shocking!" ejaculated the Miss Masons in a breath, and looked at the Reverend Frederick.

"I'll wager I find the truants," said Bubble, about to go; but he was saved the trouble, for at that moment they appeared; the fair Jane looking very confused,—Harry Loring remarkably happy.

"We've all been talking about you two," blurted out Hearty. "No scandal though, so sit down and enable us to recover our appetites, for our anxiety nearly took them away. Now tell us, what have you been doing?"

Poor Jane did not know which way to look, nor what to say; and it never occurred to Hearty that his question might possibly confuse her. Loring, however, came to the rescue.

"Admiring the architecture, exploring elsewhere, and examining everything, which no one else appears to have done, or the dinner-bell would not have been answered so speedily. And now, old fellow, I'll drink a glass of champagne with you."

This would not blind us, however. Every one saw what he had been about, and no small blame to him either. Of course, no one further hinted at the subject. After dinner we again wandered about the ruins, and the shades of evening surprised us while still there, to the great horror of Mrs. Topgallant, and not a little to that of the Miss Masons, who had been so earnestly listening to a discourse of the Reverend Frederick on the importance of reviving monasteries, that they did not observe the sun set.

"Hillo, ladies and gentlemen! we ought to be on board again," sung out Hearty, from the top of a high

wall to which he had climbed. "There is no time to be lost, if we would not displease our mammas."

A good deal of time, however, was lost in collecting the scattered sheep, and in carrying down the baskets to the boats, which the servants had neglected to do. When we did at length reach the spot at which we had landed, a bank of mud was alone to be seen, and one of the men brought us the pleasing intelligence that the nearest place at which we could possibly embark was about a mile down the river.

"We here have a convincing proof that time and tide wait for no one," cried Bubble; "or the latter would certainly have remained up for the convenience of so many charming young ladies."

"Shocking!" exclaimed Mrs. Topgallant.

"What will our mammas say?" ejaculated all the fair damsels.

"That it's very improper," said the chaperone-general.

"It can't be helped now; so if we do not intend to spend the night on the beach, we had better keep moving," observed one of the gentlemen.

Henry Flareup expressed his opinion that the dismay their non-arrival would cause would be jolly fun, and the Miss Rattlers were in ecstasies of delight at the *contretemps*.

However, no one grumbled very much, and at last we reached the boats. A new difficulty then arose. They barely floated with the crews in them, but with passengers on board they would be aground. The men had to get out, and, as it was, the only approach to them was over wet mud of a soft nature, yet no persuasions would induce the ladies to be carried to them. Mrs. Topgallant would not hear of such a thing, and boldly led the van through the mud. The young ladies followed, nearly losing their shoes, and most effectually draggling (I believe it is a proper word) their gowns. Hearty counted them off to see, as he said, that none were missing; and then began the work of getting the boats afloat, one or two of the ladies, not accustomed to yachting, being dreadfully alarmed at seeing the men jump overboard, to lift them along. Huzza! off we went at last and pulled towards the 'Frolic.'

"Let's get back as fast as we can, Snow," exclaimed Hearty, as soon as he stepped on deck.

"Beg pardon, sir, it won't be very fast, though," answered the master.

"Why, how is that?" asked Hearty; "an hour and a half will do it, won't it?"

"Bless your heart, no, sir," said old Snow, almost laughing at the idea. "It's just dead low water, so

the flood will make up for the best part of the next six hours, and after that, if there doesn't come more wind than we has now, we shan't make no great way."

"But let us at all events get up our anchor and try to do something," urged Hearty, whose ideas of navigation were not especially distinct at the time.

"If we does, sir, we shall drive up to Southampton, or maybe to Redbridge, for there ain't an hair in all the 'eavens," was the encouraging answer given by the master.

I never saw a more perfect calm. A candle was lighted on deck, and the flame went straight up as if in a room. If we had been in a tropical climate we should have looked out for a hurricane. Here nothing so exciting was to be apprehended. The conversation with the master was not overheard by any of the ladies, and Hearty thought it was as well to say nothing about it, but to leave them to suppose that we were on our way back to Cowes.

"It is much too dark to distinguish the shore, and as none of them ever think of looking at the sails, they will not discover that we are still at anchor," he observed; and so it proved, as we shall presently see.

The after-cabin had been devoted to the use of the fairer portion of the guests, and when they got there

and found the muddy condition of their dresses, there was a general cry for hot water to wash them. Luckily the cook's coppers could supply a good quantity, and two tubs were sent aft, in which, as was afterwards reported—for we were not allowed to be spectators of the process—the honourable Mrs. Topgallant and her *protégées* were busily employed in rinsing their skirts, though it was not quite so easy a matter to dry them. Tea and coffee were next served up in the main cabin, and cakes and muffins and toast in profusion were produced, and as Carstairs quietly observed, "Never were washerwomen more happy."

There was only one thing wanting, we had not sufficient milk; and that there might be no scarcity in future, it was proposed to send the steward on shore with Henry Flareup to swap him for a cow to be kept on board instead. He was fixed on as the victim, as it was considered that he had been making too much love to one of the Miss Sandons, conduct altogether unbecoming one of his tender years.

"We have passed a very pleasant evening, Mr. Hearty, I can assure you," said the chaperone; "and as I suppose we shall soon be there, we had better get ready to go on shore."

"We shall have time for a dance first; we have had the deck cleared, and the musicians are ready,"

replied Hearty; "may I have the honour of opening the ball with you, Mrs. Topgallant?"

"Oh, I don't know what to say to such a thing—I'm afraid it will be very incorrect; and at all events you must excuse me, Mr. Hearty, I shall have quite enough to do to look after my charges."

And as Mrs. Topgallant said this, she glanced round at the assembled young ladies.

"A dance, a dance, by all means!" exclaimed the Miss Rattlers; "what capital fun!"

A dance was therefore agreed on, and we went on deck, which we found illuminated with all the lanterns and spare lamps which could be found on board; and even candles, without any shade, were stuck on the taffrail, and the boom was topped up so as to be completely out of the way. We owed the arrangements to Bubble, Carstairs, and the master, who had been busily employed while the rest were below at tea. An exclamation of delight burst from the lips of the young ladies, the musicians struck up a polka, and in another minute all hands were footing it away as gaily as in any ball-room, and with far more merriment and freedom.

> Ye gentlemen and ladies who stay at home at ease,
> Ah little do ye think upon the fun there's on the seas!

How we did dance! No one tired. Even Mrs.

Topgallant got up and took a turn with the Gentle Giant; and very nearly went overboard by-the-by. We had no hot lamps, no suffocating perfumed atmosphere, to oppress us, as in a London ball-room. The clear sky was our ceiling, the cool water was around us. Every gentleman had danced with every lady, except that Loring had taken more than his share with Miss Seaton before we thought of giving in.

"Well, I wonder we don't get there!" on a sudden exclaimed Mrs. Topgallant, as if something new had struck her.

There was a general laugh, set, I am sorry to say, by Sir Francis Futtock.

"Why, my dear madam, we have not begun to go yet."

"Not begun to go!" cried the Miss Masons. "What will be said of us?"

"Not begun to go!" groaned the Rev. Fred. "What will my flock do without me?"

"Why, I thought we had been moving all the time. We have passed a number of objects which I should have taken for ghosts, if I believed in such things," said Mrs. Topgallant.

"Those were vessels going up with the tide, my dear madam, to Southampton, where we should have gone also," observed Sir Francis.

Just then a tall dark object came out of the gloom, and glided by us at a little distance. It certainly had what one might suppose, the appearance of a spirit wandering over the face of the waters.

"'Art thou a spirit blessed, or goblin damned?'" began Carstairs. "'Bring with thee airs from Heaven?'"

"I wish it did," interrupted Bubble, "and we might have a chance of getting to Cowes to-night."

"'Or blasts from Hell,'" continued the Gentle Giant. "'Thou comest in such a questionable shape that I will speak to thee.'"

"Cutter, ahoy! What cutter is that?" hailed a voice from the stranger.

"It's one of them revenue chaps," said Snow. "The 'Frolic' yacht; Edward Hearty, Esq., owner!" answered the old man; "and be hanged to you," he muttered.

"'I'll call thee king—father, royal Dane. Oh, answer me!'" continued Carstairs.

"He'll not answer you,—so avast spouting, and let's have another turn at dancing!" exclaimed Hearty, interrupting the would-be actor, and dragging him to the side of Mrs. Skyscraper, who did not refuse his request to dance another quadrille.

Thus at it again we went, to the no small amuse-

ment of a number of spectators, whose voices could be heard round us. Their boats were just dimly visible, though from the bright lights on our deck we could not see the human beings on board them. At last the rippling sound against our bows ceasing, gave notice that the tide had slackened, and that we might venture on lifting anchor. A light air also sprang up from the eastward, and slowly we began to move on our right course. Some of the unnauticals, however, forgot that with an ebb tide and an easterly wind, there was not much chance of our reaching Cowes in a hurry. A thick fog also began to rise from the calm water; and after the dancing, for fear of their catching cold, cloaks and coats, plaids and shawls, were in great requisition among the young ladies. Mrs. Topgallant insisted that they would all be laid up, and that they must go below till they got into Cowes harbour.

"She was excessively angry," she said, "with Mr. Hearty for keeping them out in this way; and as for Sir Francis Futtock, a captain in Her Majesty's navy, she was, indeed, surprised that such a thing could happen while he was on board.

"But, my dear madam," urged Sir Francis in his defence, "you know that accidents will happen in the best-regulated families. Nobody asked my

advice, and I could not venture to volunteer it, or I might have foretold what has happened. However, come down below, and I trust no harm will ensue."

After some persuasion, the good lady was induced to go below, and to rest herself on a sofa in one of the sleeping-cabins, the door of which Harry Flareup quietly locked, at a hint from Hearty, who then told the young ladies that, as Cerberus was chained, they might now do exactly what they liked. I must do them the justice to say that they behaved very well. There was abundance of laughter, however, especially when Miss Susan Rattler appeared habited in a large box-coat belonging to Captain Carstairs. It had certainly nothing yachtish about it. It was of a whitey-brown hue, with great horn buttons and vast pockets. It was thoroughly roadish—it smelt of the road—its appearance was of the road. It reminded one of the days of four-in-hand coaches; and many a tale it could doubtless tell of Newmarket; of races run, of bets booked. Not content with wearing the coat, Susan was persuaded to try a cigar. She puffed away manfully for some time.

"You look a very jemmy young gent, indeed you do," observed the Gentle Giant, looking up at her as he sat at her feet. "What would your mamma say if she saw you?"

"What an odious custom you men have of smoking," cried Hearty, pretending not to see who was the culprit.

"In the presence of ladies, too," exclaimed Loring, really ignorant of the state of the case.

Poor Susan saw that she was laughed at, and, beginning probably at the same time to feel a little sick from the fumes of the tobacco, she was not sorry of an excuse for throwing Carstairs' best Havannah into water.

As the fog settled over us rather heavily, not only were the more delicate part of the company wrapped up in cloaks and shawls, but we got up the blankets and counterpanes from the cabins, and swaddled them up completely in them, while the gentlemen threw themselves along at their feet, partly in a fit of romantic gallantry, and partly, it is just possible, to assist in keeping themselves warm. Carstairs recited Shakspeare all night long, and Loring sang some capital songs.

By this time we had got down to Calshot; and, as the tide was now setting down pretty strong, we appeared to be going along at a good rate.

"How soon shall we be in, captain?" asked one of the Miss Masons of the skipper, who was at the helm.

"That depends, miss, whether a breeze comes

before we get down to Yarmouth or Hurst; because, if we keep on, we shan't be far off either one or the other before the tide turns," was the unsatisfactory answer.

"Keep on, by all means, Snow," exclaimed Hearty, who had not heard all that was said; "I promised to do my best to get in, and we must keep at it."

So tideward we went; the little wind there had been dropping altogether. Presently we heard a hail.

"What cutter is that?"

"The 'Frolic.'"

"Please, sir, we were sent out to look for you, to bring Mrs. Topgallant and Miss Masons, and some other ladies, on shore."

There was a great deal of talk, but Hearty had determined that no one should leave the yacht. Mrs. Topgallant was below, and could not be disturbed; besides, the other young ladies could not be left without a chaperone. The Miss Masons wanted to go in company with their pastor, but it would not exactly do to be out in a boat alone with the Reverend Fred. As that gentleman was afraid of catching cold, he was at the time safe below, and knew nothing of what was taking place, so the boat was sent off without a freight. Hearty vowed that he would fire on any other boat which came near us to carry off any of his guests. Thus the night wore on.

It would be impossible to record all the witty things which were said, all the funny things which were done, and all the laughter which was laughed. All I can say is, that the ladies and gentlemen were about as unlike as possible to what they would have been in town during the season. Hour after hour passed rapidly away, and not a little surprised were they when the bright streaks of dawn appeared in the eastern sky, and Egypt Point was seen a long way off in the same direction, while the vessel was found to be turning round and round without any steerage way.

Now it was very wrong and very improper, and I don't mean for a moment to defend our conduct, though, by-the-by, the fault was all Hearty's; but it was not till half-past eleven of the next day that the party set foot once more upon the shore. Never was there a merrier pic-nic; and, what is more, in spite of wet feet and damp fogs, no one was a bit the worse for it.

Looking in at the post-office (how I do hate the penny-postage system!), I found a letter summoning me immediately to London.

Sending a note to Hearty, to tell him of my departure, I set off forthwith, and reached the modern Babylon that same night. How black and dull and dingy it looked; how hot it felt; how smoky it smelt!

I was never celebrated for being a good man of business; but on the present occasion I worked with a will, and it was wonderful with what rapidity I got through the matter in hand, and once more turned my back on the mighty metropolis.

CHAPTER V.

TRUE LOVE RUNS ANYTHING BUT SMOOTH.—BEING A MELANCHOLY SUBJECT, I CUT IT SHORT.

THE day after my return I met Harry Loring. Alas! how changed was the once joyous expression of his countenance!

"My dear fellow, what is the matter?" I asked.

"What, don't you know?" he exclaimed. "I thought all the world did, and laughed at me. False, fickle, heartless flirting!"

"What is all this about?" I asked. "I deeply regret, I feel——"

"Oh, of course you do," he replied, interrupting me petulantly. "I'll tell you how it was. She had accepted me, as you may have guessed, and I made sure that there would be no difficulties, as she has plenty of money, though I have little enough; but when there is sufficient on one side, what more can be required? At last one day she said, 'I wish, Mr. Loring, you would speak to mamma' (she had always called me

Harry before). 'Of course I will,' said I, thinking it was a hint to fix the day; but after I left her, my mind misgave me. Well, my dear fellow, as I dare say you know, that same having to speak to papa or mamma is the most confoundedly disagreeable thing of all the disagreeables in life, when one hasn't got a good rent-roll to show. At least, after all the billing and cooing, and the romance and sentiment of love, it is such a worldly matter-of-fact, pounds-shillings-and-pence affair, that it is enough to disgust a fellow. However, I nerved myself up for the encounter, and was ushered into the presence of the old dragon."

"You shouldn't speak of your intended mother-in-law in that way," I observed, interrupting him.

"My intended—; but you shall hear," he continued. "'Well, sir, I understand that you have favoured my daughter with an offer,' she began. I didn't like the tone of her voice nor the look of her green eye—they meant mischief. 'I have had the happiness of being accepted by—' 'Stay, stay!' she exclaimed, interrupting me. 'My daughter would not think of accepting you without asking my leave, and I, as a mother, must first know what fortune you can settle on her.'—'Everything she has got or ever will have,' I replied, as fast as I could utter the words. 'My father and mother are excellent people, and they have

kindly offered us a house, and—' 'Is that it, Mr. Loring? And you have nothing—absolutely nothing?' shrieked out the old woman. Oh, how I hated her! 'Then, sir, I beg you will clearly understand, that from this moment all communication between you and my daughter ceases for ever. I could not have believed that any gentleman would have been guilty of such impertinence. What! a man without a penny, to think of marrying my daughter, with her beauty and her fortune! There, sir, you have got my answer; I hope you understand it; go, sir—go.' I did go without uttering another word, though I gave her a look which ought to have confounded her; and here you see me, a miserable heart-broken man. I have been in vain trying to get a glimpse of Jane, to ask her if it was by her will that I am thus discarded: and if so, to whistle her down the wind; but I have dreadful suspicions that it was a plot between them to get rid of me, and if so I have had a happy escape."

I have an idea that his last suspicion was right. Poor fellow, I pitied him. It struck me as a piece of arrant folly on the part of the mother, that a nice, gentlemanly, good-looking fellow should be sent to the right about simply because he was poor, when the young lady had ample fortune for them both.

"Look here!" exclaimed Loring, bitterly, "is it not

enough to make a man turn sick with grief and pain as he looks round and sees those he once knew as blooming nice girls growing into crusty old maids, because their parents chose to insist on an establishment and settlement for them equal to what they themselves enjoy, instead of remembering the altered circumstances of the times? Not one man in ten has a fortune; and if the talents and energy of the rising generation are not to be considered as such, Hymen may blow out his torch and cut his stick, and the fair maidens of England will have to sing for ever and a day, 'Nobody coming to marry me, nobody coming to woo.'"

I laughed, though I felt the truth of what he said. "But are you certain that you were disinterested? Were you in no way biassed in your love by her supposed fortune?" I asked.

"On my word, I was not. I never thought of the tin," was the answer.

"Then," I replied, "I must say that you are a very ill-used gentleman."

CHAPTER VI.

HOW TO KILL TIME.—THE O'WIGGINS.—ENGLAND'S BULWARKS.—JACK MIZEN AND THE 'FUN.'—HER FAIR CREW.—NAVAL HEROES AND NAUTICAL HEROINES.

I HAD promised to yacht during the summer with Hearty; and as he paid me the compliment of saying that he could not do without me, notwithstanding several other invitations I had received, I felt myself in honour bound to rejoin the 'Frolic.' I had no disinclination to so doing, though I own at times we led a rather more rollicking life than altogether suited my taste. Accordingly I once more took up my berth aboard the 'Frolic.' Hearty was growing somewhat tired of the style of life he was leading. He wanted more variety—more excitement. Indeed, floating about inside the Isle of Wight with parties of ladies on board is all very well in its way, to kill time, but unless one of the fair creatures happens to be the only girl he ever loved, or, at all events, the only girl he

loves just then, or the girl he loves best, he very soon wearies of the amusement, if he is worth anything, and longs for the wide ocean, and a mixture of storms with sunshine and smooth water. I found the party on board the 'Frolic' increased by the addition of two. The most worthy of note was Tom Porpoise, a thorough seaman, and as good a fellow as ever stepped. He had entered into an arrangement with Hearty to act as captain of the yacht; for though Snow was a very good sailing-master he was nothing of a navigator, and Hearty was now contemplating a trip to really distant lands.

Porpoise was a lieutenant in the navy, of some years' standing; he had seen a great deal of service, and was considered a good officer. He sang a good song, told a good story, and was always in good spirits and good humour. He had been in the Syrian war, in China, on the coast of Africa, and in South America; indeed, wherever there had been any fighting, or work of any sort to be done, there has dashing Tom Porpoise been found. He had a good appetite, and, as old Snow used to say, his victuals did him good. Porpoise was fat; there was no denying the fact, nor was he ashamed of it. His height was suited to the dimensions of a small craft, and then, having stated that his face was red, not from intemperance, but from sun and spray, I

think that I shall have sufficiently described our most excellent chum.

The other addition of note was ycleped Gregory Groggs. How Hearty came to ask him on board I do not know. It could scarcely have been for his companionable qualities, nor for his general knowledge and information, for I have seldom met a more simple-minded creature; one who had seen less of the world, or knew less of its wicked ways. It was his first trip to sea, and he afforded us no little amusement by his surprise at everything he beheld and everything which occurred. He had a tolerably strong inside; so, as we had fine weather, he, fortunately for us and for himself, was seldom sea-sick. Our friend Groggs was a native of an inland county, from which he had never before stirred, when, having come into some little property, he was seized with a strong desire to see the world. He had been reading some book or other which had given him most extraordinary principles; and one of his ideas was, that people should marry others of a different nation, as the only way of securing peace throughout the world. He informed us that he should early put his principles into practice, and that, should he find some damsel to suit his taste in France, he should without fail wed her. We bantered him unmercifully on the subject; but, as is the case with many

other people with one idea, that was not easily knocked out of his head.

Hearty, having fallen in with him on a visit to his part of the country, invited him, should he ever come to the sea-side, to visit the 'Frolic.' By a wonderful chance, Groggs did find his way on board the yacht, as she one day had gone up to Southampton, and once on board, finding himself very comfortable, he exhibited no inclination to leave her. He therein showed his taste; and Hearty, though at first he would have dispensed with his company, at last got accustomed to him, and would have been almost sorry to part with him.

So much for Groggs.

We lay at anchor off Cowes. Several other vessels lay there also, mostly schooners—a rig which has lately much come into fashion.

"What shall we do next?" exclaimed Hearty, as we sat at table after dinner over our biscuits and wine.

"What shall we do next?" said Carstairs, repeating Hearty's question; "why, I vote we go on deck and smoke a cigar."

We had not time to execute the important proposal before the steward put his head into the cabin, and announced a boat alongside.

"Who is it?" asked Hearty.

"Mr. O'Wiggins, of the 'Popple' schooner, sir,"

answered the steward. "She brought up while you were at dinner, sir."

"Oh, ask him down below," said our host, throwing himself back in his chair with a resigned look, which said, more than words, "What a bore!"

Before the steward could reach the deck, O'Wiggins was heard descending the companion-ladder. He was a tall, broadly-built man, with a strongly-marked Hibernian countenance. Hearty did not think it necessary to rise to receive his guest, but O'Wiggins, no way disconcerted, threw himself into a vacant chair.

"Ah, Hearty, my boy! faith, I'm glad to find any one I know in this dull place," he exclaimed, stretching out his legs, and glancing round at the rest of us, as he helped himself from a decanter towards which Hearty pointed.

"We are not likely to be here long, but we are undecided what next to do," returned Hearty.

"Och, then, I'll tell you what to do, my boy," said O'Wiggins. "Just look in at the regattas to the westward, and then run over to Cherbourg. I've just come across from there, and all the world of France is talking of the grand naval review they are to have of a fleet, in comparison to which that of perfidious Albion is as a collection of Newcastle colliers. There'll be rare fun of one sort or another, depend on it; and, for

my part, I wouldn't miss it on any account. What say your friends to the idea? I haven't had the pleasure of meeting them before, I think?"

"I beg your pardon," said Hearty; "I forgot to introduce them." And he did so in due form; at which O'Wiggins seemed mightily pleased, and directly afterwards began addressing us familiarly by our patronymics, as if we were old friends. In fact, in a wonderfully short space of time he made himself perfectly at home. The proposal of the Cherbourg expedition pleased us all; and it was finally agreed that we would go there. We could not help being amused with O'Wiggins, in spite of the cool impudence of his manner. He told some capital stories, in which he always played a prominent part; and though we might have found some difficulty in believing them, they were not on that account the less entertaining. Meantime coffee and cigars made their appearance. O'Wiggins showed a determination to smoke below, and Hearty could not insist on his going on deck; so we sat and sat on; Porpoise enjoying the fun, and Groggs listening with opening eyes at all the wonders narrated by our Irish visitor, for whom he had evidently conceived a vast amount of admiration. At a late hour, O'Wiggins looked at his watch, and finding that his boat was alongside, he at length took his departure.

We were present at most of the regattas to the westward, but as they differed but little from their predecessors for many years past, I need not describe them. No place equals Plymouth for a regatta, either on account of the beauty of the surrounding scenery, or in affording a good view of the course from the shore. By-the-by, it was some little satisfaction to look at the two new forts run up on either side of the entrance to the harbour, as well as at the one with tremendously heavy metal between the citadel and Devonport, not to speak of the screw guardships, which may steam out and take up a position wherever required. I can never forget the superb appearance of that mammoth of two-deckers, the 'Albion,' with her ninety guns, and a tonnage greater than most three-deckers. It is said that she could not fight her lower-deck guns in a heavy sea; but one is so accustomed to hear the ignorant or unjust abuse and the falsehood levied at her talented builder, that one may be excused from crediting such an assertion. She is acknowledged to be fast; and, from looking at her, I should say that she has all the qualifications of a fighting ship, and a great power of stowage. What more can be required? If she is not perfect, it is what must be said of all human fabrics. If Sir William Symonds had never done more than get rid of those sea-coffins, the ten-gun

brigs, and introduce a class of small craft superior to any before known in the service, the navy would have cause to be deeply indebted to him. He has enemies; but in the service I have generally found officers willing and anxious to acknowledge his merits.

There is no little satisfaction in cruising about Plymouth Sound. I suspect that now our neighbours would not be so ready to attempt to surprise the place and to burn its arsenal, as they one fine night thought of doing some few years back. People in general are so accustomed to believe our sacred coasts impregnable, that they could not comprehend that such an enterprise was possible. Yet I can assure my readers that not only was it possible, practicable, in contemplation, and that every preparation was made, but that we were perfectly helpless, and that they would indubitably have succeeded in doing all they intended. Neither Plymouth nor Portsmouth were half fortified; and such fortifications as existed were not half garrisoned, while we could not have collected a fleet sufficient to have defended either one or the other. Providentially the differences were adjusted in time, and the French had not the excuse of inflicting that long-enduring vengeance which they have a not unnatural desire to gratify. When they have thrashed us once, and not till then, shall we be cordial friends; and, though

electric wires and railroads keep up a constant communication, may that day be long distant! We had brought up just inside Drake's Island, which, as all who know Plymouth are aware, is at the entrance of Hamoaze. We were just getting under weigh, and were all on deck, when a cutter-yacht passed us, standing out of the harbour. Our glasses were levelled at her to see who she carried, for bonnet-ribbons and shawls were fluttering in the breeze.

"What cutter is that?" asked Porpoise. "There's a remarkably pretty girl on board of her."

"That must be—yes, I'm certain of it—that must be the 'Fun;' and, by Jove, there's jolly Jack Mizen himself at the helm!" ejaculated Hearty, with for him unusual animation.

He waved his cap as the rest of us did, for Porpoise and I knew Mizen. Mizen waved his in return, and shouted out,—

"Come and take a cruise with us. We'll expect you on board to lunch."

"Ay, ay!" shouted Hearty, for there was no time for a longer answer before the yacht shot by us.

We had soon sail made on the 'Frolic,' and were standing after the 'Fun' towards the westernmost and broadest entrance to the Sound. It was a lovely day, without a cloud in the sky, and a fine steady breeze;

such a day as, from its rarity, one knows how to value in England. Yachts of all sizes and many rigs were cruising about in the Sound. Largest of all was the 'Brilliant,' a three-masted square topsail schooner, of nearly 400 tons, belonging to Mr. Ackers, the highly-esteemed Commodore of the Royal Victoria Yacht Club; and as for the smallest, there were some with the burgee of a club flying of scarcely ten tons. We, meantime, were standing after the 'Fun.' Her owner, Jack Mizen, had once been in the navy; but before he had risen above the exalted rank of a midshipman he had come into a moderate independence, which enabled him to keep a yacht and a hunter, and not being of an aspiring disposition, he had quitted the service, with the intention of living on shore and enjoying himself. He, after a few years, however, got tired of doing nothing, so he bought a yacht and went afloat, and, as he used to say,——

"Fool that I am, I have to pay for sailing about in a small craft, not knowing where to go or what to do; when, if I had stuck to the service, I might have got paid for sailing in a large ship, and have been told where to go and what to do. Never leave a profession in a huff; you'll repent it once, and that will be to the end of your days, if you do."

Such was Jack Mizen. He was a jolly, good-

natured fellow. He sang a good song, told a good story, and everybody liked him. He had seven ladies on board, two of whom we judged to be chaperones; the other five were young, and if not pretty, were full of smiles and laughter. The 'Fun' was much smaller than the 'Frolic,' so we easily kept way with her, and ran round the Eddystone and hove to, while the racing vessels came round also. We four bachelors then went on board the 'Fun,' and were welcomed not only by her owner, but by the many bright eyes she contained. There were already four or five gentlemen on board, but they had not done much to make themselves agreeable, so nearly all the work had fallen on Mizen. We gladly came to his assistance: poor Groggs, also, afforded them much amusement, but it was at his own expense (not the first person in a like position), unknown to himself. They were all talking about Cherbourg, and had insisted on Mizen's taking them over there. He, of course, was delighted. The main cabin was to be devoted to them. Fortunately, however, one chaperone and two damsels could not go, so the rest might continue to rough it for a few nights. We had a large luncheon and much small talk. I mustn't describe the ladies, lest they should be offended. If I was to say that

one of the chaperones was fat, and another tall, all the fat and tall elderly ladies on the water that day would consider I intended to represent them. However, there can be no risk in saying that the eldest dame was Mrs. Mizen, an aunt of the owner of the 'Fun,' and chaperone-general to the party. The very pretty girl was Laura Mizen, her daughter, and the other married lady was Mrs. Rullock, wife of Commander Rullock, R.N., and who had also two unmarried daughters under her wing. Of the other young ladies, one was Fanny Farlie, a rival in beauty, certainly, of Laura Mizen—it was difficult to say which was the prettiest—and another was her cousin, Susan Simms, who read novels, played on the piano, was devoted to the polka, and kept tame rabbits. It was perceptible to us, before we had been long on board, that Mizen affected Fanny, while Miss Mizen at once, with some effect, set her cap at Hearty. She did not intend to do so, but she could not help it. She was not thinking of his fortune nor of his position, nor did she wish to become mistress of the 'Frolic.' Of the gentlemen, one was in the Navy, Lieutenant Piper, an old messmate of Mizen's, and Mr. Simon Simms, the brother of Susan, who had an office in the dockyard, smoked cigars, and was very nautical in his propensities.

There was a fat old gentleman and a thin Major Clay, of a foot regiment; but I have not space to describe all the party. They will reappear in their proper places. We ate and drank, and were very merry, and sailed about all day, most of us hoping to meet again at Cherbourg.

CHAPTER VII.

YACHT SQUADRONS ON A CRUISE.—O'WIGGINS'S 'POPPLE.'—ARRIVAL IN CHERBOURG.—THE PEACE CONGRESS AND THE FRENCH CHANNEL FLEET.—LIONIZING ON SHORE.—GROGGS LOST.—HIS FIRST LOVE.—AN IRATE PARENT.

A CROWD of yachts might have been seen one fine morning becalmed outside the Needles. We were among them. We had sailed from Cowes the previous evening, but had been unable to get further, from the light winds and calms which had prevailed. At last a breeze from the northward sprang up, and we went gaily along. It was a beautiful sight; and no one could fail to be in good spirits as we spoke the various vessels on board which we had acquaintances. The 'Popple' was among them, but having started first, was ahead till we came up with her, much to her owner's disgust. O'Wiggins entertained the idea (very common not only to yachtsmen, but to masters of vessels and seamen in general, and

a very happy one it is) that his vessel was the fastest, the most beautiful, and the best sea-boat going. "Ah, Hearty, old fellow, how are you?" he hailed. "You've brought a nice breeze up with you. We haven't had a breath of it till this minute; we shall now stand on in company." As he spoke, we observed his master trimming sails with the greatest care, for he saw that we were already shooting past him at a great rate. We laughed, for we knew that the 'Popple' was a regular slow coach, as slow as she was ugly. She had once, I believe, been a cutter of the old build, with a high bow, and she was then lengthened, and had a new stern stuck on to her, and was rigged as a schooner. As a cutter she had been considered fast; but her new canvas was too much for her, and she could not manage to wag with it. Her copper was painted of a bright red, and she had altogether a very peculiar and unmistakable appearance. We saw O'Wiggins walking his deck with very impatient gestures as we shot past him. He could not make it out; something must be the matter with the 'Popple;' she was out of trim; it was the master's fault, but what was wrong was more than he could discover. His philosophy, if he had any, was sorely tried as yacht after yacht passed him, and more than all, when

every one on board laughed at him. The fact was, that poor O'Wiggins had done so many things to make himself ridiculous, that every one considered him a fair subject to exercise their merriment on. It was night before we made the lights on the French coast. First the Barfleur lights and Cape La Hogue to the south were seen, then those of Pilee and Querqueville, and lastly the breakwater and harbour lights, and we soon after ran in by the south entrance, and anchored among the crowd of vessels of all sizes already in the harbour. One by one the yachts came, and last, though not least, the 'Popple' appeared, and brought up near us. O'Wiggins instantly came on board to explain why the 'Popple' had not got in first; but all we could make out was, that she had not sailed as fast as she could because she had not. We did not go on shore that night. We had amusement enough, as we walked the deck with our cigars in our mouths, in watching the lights on shore and afloat, and the vessels as they came gliding noiselessly in, like dark spirits, and took up their berths wherever they could find room, and in listening to the hails from the ships-of-war, and those from the yachts' boats, as they pulled about trying to find their respective craft. We amused ourselves by marking the contrasts between the voices of the two

nations—the sharp shrill cry of the French, and the deep bass of John Bull.

A good deal of sea tumbled into the bay during the night, in consequence of the fresh northerly breeze, and many an appetite was put *hors de combat* in consequence. Poor Groggs, we heard him groaning as he lay in his berth, "Oh, why was I tempted to cross the sea to come to this outlandish place, for the sake of watching a few French ships moving about, which, I dare say, after all, don't differ much from as many English ones?" He exclaimed, between the paroxysms of his agony, "Oh dear! oh dear! it's the last time I'll come yachting, that it is!" Poor Gregory!—he was not the only one ill that night, I take it; and I am sure Hearty pardoned his not very grateful observations. We were early on deck, to inhale the fresh breeze, after the somewhat close air of the cabin: then indeed a splendid sight met our view. In the first place, floating in the bay, were nine line-of-battle ships, in splendid fighting order, their dark batteries frowning down upon us; and, drawn up in another line, were a number of large war-steamers, besides many other steamers, both British and French; and lastly, and no unpleasing sight, there were some seventy or eighty yachts; it was impossible to count them—schooners, cutters, and yawls, besides some merchantmen and innumerable

small craft of every description, all so mingled together that it appeared as if they would never get free of each other again. To the south was the town, with its masses of houses and churches, and its mercantile docks in front. On the west, the naval arsenal and docks, the pride of France and Frenchmen, and which so many had come to see. On the other side were the shores of the harbour, stretching out to Pilee Island, and not far from the town a scarped hill looking down on it, with a fine view obtainable from the top, while to the north, outside all, was the famous digue, or breakwater, which the French assert eclipses that of Plymouth, as the big sea-serpent does a common conger eel. It was begun by Louis XIV., and almost completed during the reign of Louis Philippe; during which period it was one night nearly washed away, while some hundred unfortunate workmen engaged on it were in the morning not to be found; but their place being supplied, the works were continued.

I wish no ill to France or Frenchmen, only I hope, if it ever shelters a flotilla for the invasion of Albion, it may, the night before they sail, meet with its former fate, and that their ships may be driven high and dry on the sand. It will be a mercy to the Frenchmen, and save them from being very sick and tremendously thrashed at the end of their voyage. Now, I would

not have it supposed that I, a yachtsman, who have often set foot in France, have any rabid dislike to Frenchmen or Frenchwomen. Their cooks, I own, dress most digestible and palatable dinners, and their ladies and grisettes dress themselves to perfection, so that in both cases our tastes are captivated. They talk fluently and amusingly—they dance vehemently, and as if either they liked it or thought it an important occupation—and they make very pretty clocks, which don't go very well—and very elegant toys, which are apt to break in the hands of clumsy little John Bulls. Indeed, I might enumerate numberless good qualities they possess, and I am not in the humour to pick out any of the bad ones which may be discernible; only I do wish that they would listen to the exhortations of our peace advocates, and would not enlarge their arsenals in every direction, and increase their fleets as far as their means will allow.

Of course they don't sail along our coasts in the said fleets, and look into our harbours with any sinister motive. Of course they do not wish to accustom their seamen to the view of the much-dreaded coast of perfidious Albion, nor to show them the way into our numberless unprotected harbours, far away from railroads or the means of sending down troops in a hurry to dislodge an invading army—for, of course, no

Frenchman doubts the possibility of their landing. Perhaps, however, they have listened to those angels of peace, and their only desire is to instruct their seamen in the art of sketching from nature, and to afford them a finer and bolder coast scenery than is to be found on their own shores. That, of course, was the reason why they selected Torbay for the honour of their first visit; and I hope their friends there were flattered by the compliment paid to their scenery.

So much for the French Channel fleet; and now to return to the show at Cherbourg, and the doings of our party there. The first day nothing of public importance took place. Yachts came gliding in from all quarters, and steamers, if with less grace, at all events with more noise, bustle, and smoke, paddled up the harbour, with their cargoes of felicity-hunting human beings, very sick and very full of regrets at their folly at having left terra firma to cross the unstable element. Among other English craft, the 'Fun' came in with Jack Mizen and a large party on board. We quickly pulled alongside to welcome our friends. The ladies had proved better sailors than most of the gentlemen; and though good Mrs. Mizen, the chaperone of the party, had been a little put out, and still looked rather yellow about the lower extremity of the face, the young ladies who had been cruising all the summer, and

tumbling about in all sorts of weather, had borne the passage remarkably well, and were as frisky and full of laughter as their dear sex are apt to be when they have everything their own way.

We, of course, as in duty bound, undertook to escort them on shore to show them the lions of the place. As the President was not expected till the evening, there was nothing particular to be done, so we had full time to walk about and to lionize to our heart's content. Hearty took especial charge of Laura Mizen, while the owner of the 'Fun' kept Fanny Farlie under his arm, and looked unutterable things into her bonnet every now and then, while Susan Simms fell to my share; for Porpoise made it a point of conscience, I believe, always to watch over the welfare of the chaperone. It was one of his many good points.

Remember, in forming a party of pleasure, never fail to secure a man who likes to make himself agreeable to the chaperone, or you will inevitably make some promising youth miserable, and bore the old lady into the bargain. Groggs was the only man not paired. It was a pity the Miss Rullocks had not come; no blame to them, but their pa would not let them. Mizen had brought no other gentlemen, as he had to give up all the after-part of his craft to his fair passengers, in order to make them comfortable.

The two gigs carried the party properly apportioned between each, and in fine style we dashed up under the eyes of thousands of admiring spectators to the landing-place at the entrance of the inner basin, now filled with a number of yachts, which had got in there for shelter. The hotel was, of course, full; so the ladies resolved to live on board the yacht while they remained.

Our first visit was to the dockyard, through which we were conducted by a gendarme. We were particularly struck by the large proportion of anchors, of which, as Mizen observed, he supposed there was a considerable expenditure in the French fleet. The vast inner basins, yet incomplete, look like huge pits, as if excavated to discover some hidden city. There are lines of heavy batteries seaward, which would doubtlessly much inconvenience an approaching fleet; but as their shot would not reach a blockading squadron, they could not prevent an enemy's fleet from shutting up theirs inside the breakwater, while it remained fine, supposing such a squadron ready to convoy over a fleet of troop-ships to the opposite shore; and were it to come on to blow, they might be welcome to put to sea as fast as they like, and a pleasant sail to them across channel.

We went into a church where mass was being performed, and had to pay a sou each for our seats: the

faithful who do not like paying must kneel on the ground, which is kept in the most holy state of filth, in order not to tempt them to economise. Our next visit was to the Museum. Its attractions were not great, with the exception of some large pictures of naval combats, drawn by artists of merit, undoubted by the citizens of Cherbourg, but who, nevertheless, had not read "James's Naval History" to any good purpose; for, by some extraordinary oversight, the English were invariably getting tremendously thrashed (without their knowing it), and the French fleet were, with colours flying, proudly victorious. Perhaps our histories differ; for certain battles, which we consider of importance, were not even in any way represented. Trafalgar, St. Vincent, the Nile, were totally ignored. Porpoise said that, to show his gratitude for the attention we received, he should present them with a correct painting of the first-named battle.

"They'll alter the buntin', if you do, and hoist the French over the English," observed Hearty. "Though they may suspect that they cannot deceive the present generation, they hope to give their descendants an idea that they were everywhere victorious. They will boast of their glory, even at the risk of being convicted of fibbing by their posterity."

"They know pretty well that the easy credulity of

their countrymen will allow them to go any length, in direct opposition to truth, without fear of contradiction," replied Porpoise. "Why, the greater the scrape Nap. or any of his generals got into, the more glowing and grandiloquent was their despatch. Depend on it that humbug has vast influence in the world, and the French knowing it—small blame to them—they make use of it whenever it suits their purpose."

After we had shown all the sights to be seen to our fair companions, we were walking through the somewhat crowded streets, on our return to the boats, when by some chance we got separated from each other. We, however, managed to find our way to the rendezvous, with the exception of Groggs, who was not forthcoming. As he was guiltless of speaking a word of any other language than his mother-tongue, we could not leave him to find his way by himself on board, and accordingly Porpoise and I, handing our charges into the boat, hurried off in search of him. We agreed not to be absent more than a quarter of an hour, and away we started, taking different routes among the crowds of women with high butterfly muslin caps, and bearded soldiers with worsted epaulettes, and sailors totally unlike English, notwithstanding all the pains they had taken to imitate them. We agreed that this dissimilarity arose much from the different mould in which

the men are cast, and the utter impossibility of a French tailor cutting a seaman's jacket and trousers correctly. Poor fellows, they all wore braces, and though they tried to swagger a little in imitation of the English seaman's roll, we could not help pitying them, as destined to be soundly thrashed one day or other, if their leaders chose to go to war with us.

In despair of finding Groggs among such a collection of idlers, I was wending my way back, when I was attracted by a crowd in front of the shop of a marchand d'eau-de-Cologne, and above the din of shrill voices I heard one which, by its unmistakable accents, I recognised as that of our lost companion. At the same time, Porpoise appearing some way up the street, I beckoned him towards me, and together we worked our way through the grinning crowd. In the shop was a damsel with considerable pretensions to beauty, before whom, on his knees, appeared Groggs, fervently clasping her hand, while with no less fervour, and much more gesticulation, his hair was grasped by a little man, the father, we found, of the damsel, and whose dress and highly-curled locks at once betrayed the peruquier, or the hair-artist, as he would probably have styled himself.

"But I tell you, old gentleman, my intentions are most honourable towards the lady!" exclaimed Groggs,

trying to save his head from being scalped entirely. "I tell you, sir, I have rarely seen so much beauty and excellence combined; and, if she is not displeased with my attentions, I don't see why you or any other man should interfere."

"Je suis son père, je vous dis, et je ne permets pas de libertés avec ma fille!" cried the irate Frenchman, giving another tug at his unlucky locks.

Groggs now caught sight of us, and appealed to us to save him. As we advanced, the young lady disengaged herself from his hand and ran behind the counter, the peruquier withdrew his clutches, and Groggs rushed forward to meet us. The Frenchman gazed at us with a fierce look of inquiry; but the uniform Porpoise wore on the occasion, and my yachting costume, gained us some respect, I suppose.

"What in the name of wonder is all this about?" I exclaimed, looking at Groggs; and then turning to the Frenchman I observed, in my best French and blandest tone, "that our arrival was fortunate, as I hoped instantly to appease his wrath, and put everything on a pleasing footing."

Groggs then, in a few words, gave us his eventful history since he parted from us. He had been attracted by the words "Eau-de-Cologne" in the *affiche* over the door, and being anxious to show how well he could

make a purchase by himself, he had entered. Instantly struck all of a heap by the beauty and elegant costume of the lady, forgetting all about the eau-de-Cologne, he endeavoured to address her. What was his delight to discover that she could speak some English! Forgetful of the quick passing of time, he stayed on, till the father, hearing a stranger talking to his daughter in a tongue he could not understand, made his appearance. It was at the moment that Groggs, grown bold, had seized her hand to vow eternal constancy. The lady was not unmoved, though somewhat amused, and not offended. It was probably not the first time her hand had been so taken, she nothing loath; of which fact her most respectable sire was doubtlessly cognizant. To pacify the irate barber, we interpreted the protestations of his honourable intentions which Groggs was pouring out. The daughter, Mademoiselle Eulalie Sophie de Marabout, ably seconded our endeavours, by assuring her papa that the gentleman had behaved in the most respectful manner, nor uttered a word to offend her modest ears. At length we succeeded not only in appeasing the wrath of the *artiste*, but in propitiating him to such a degree that, assuring us that he felt convinced we were most honourable gentlemen, he invited us all to a *soirée* in his rooms over the shop that evening. Eulalie, with sweet smiles, seconded the

invitation. Groggs was delighted; and we, provided we could manage it, consented to avail ourselves of the respectable gentleman's kindness.

We now hurried off Groggs, for the ladies were all this time waiting in the boats; not before, however, he had whispered to Eulalie that nothing should prevent him, at all events, from renewing the acquaintance thus somewhat inauspiciously begun. It was impossible to refrain from telling the story when we got on board; and had Groggs' admiration for Eulalie been proof against all the raillery and banter with which he was assailed, it would have been powerful indeed. The ladies did not openly allude to his adventure, but they said enough to show him that they knew all about it, as he could not help discovering from an occasional reference made to international matrimonial alliances, and the advantages to be derived from them.

We returned on board just in time to get under weigh at a signal from our respective commodores, when the yachts of the various squadrons sailed in line outside the breakwater, under the command of the Earl of Wilton, who acted as Admiral of the Fleet. We formed in two columns, and performed a number of evolutions—we flattered ourselves, in the most creditable manner—and then we re-entered the harbour, and, running down the French line in gallant style,

took up our stations again according to signal. Our hearts swelled with pride, and we felt very grand indeed, only wishing that each of our little craft were 74 or 120 gun-ships, and that the French fleet were what they were. O'Wiggins' yacht was the only one continually out of line, or somewhere where she ought not to have been. This was owing partly to his imagining that he knew more about the matter than the commodore or any one else, and partly to the bad sailing of his craft.

Mizen invited us four bachelors to spend the evening on board the 'Fun,' and the attractions of our fair friends proved stronger than those held out by Mademoiselle Eulalie. There was an addition to our party in the person of O'Wiggins, who invited himself on board, and served as an assistant laughing-stock to poor Groggs. There was, consequently, a bond of union between the two—similar to that of two donkeys in a cart, both being lashed with the same whip. In the course of the evening O'Wiggins heard of Groggs' adventure, and, clapping him on the shoulder, assured him that he would take care it should not be his fault if he lost the lady.

We had all day been waiting in expectation of the arrival of the President, every craft being decked out with flags, and every gun loaded to do him honour.

At the hour he was expected, enthusiasm was at its height; but as time drew on, it waxed colder and colder. People had come from far and wide to see a sight which was not to be seen; they had expended their time and money, and had a right to complain. Complain, therefore, they did, ashore and afloat; and had it at that time been put to the vote whether he should longer remain President, I fear he would instantly have been shorn of his honours.

At last the bright luminary of day sank behind the dockyard, the commodores of the English craft fired the sunset gun, the flags were hauled down, and night came on. We had begun to fancy that the President's carriage must have broken down or been upset, or that he was not coming at all, when a gun was heard, and then another, followed by such a flashing, and blazing, and banging of artillery, and muskets, and crackers, and rockets, that we could have no doubt that the great man had indeed arrived.

Thus ended our first day at Cherbourg,

CHAPTER VIII.

GAY SCENE IN CHERBOURG HARBOUR.—THE O'WIGGINS AGAIN.—AQUATIC VISITING.—A DISCIPLE OF ST. IMPUDENTIA.—HOW TO BANQUET UNINVITED.—THE BALL.—VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT TO THE FLEET.—A FEW REMARKS ON AFFAIRS IN GENERAL.

By the time the world was up and had breakfasted on Friday, the harbour of Cherbourg presented a very gay appearance. The water was covered with hulls of vessels, and on the decks of the vessels were crowds of gay people, and above them a forest of tall masts, surmounted by flags innumerable, showing all the hues of the rainbow, while in every direction were dashing and splashing boats of every description, men-of-war's boats, and shore-boats; and faster moving than all, yachts' boats, which, like comets, seemed to be flying about in eccentric orbits, without any particular reason, and for no definite purpose. O'Wiggins made his appearance on board the 'Frolic,' foaming with rage.

and indignation at not having been invited to the grand banquet to be given that day to the President.

"Neither have I, nor Mizen, nor any other of the owners of yachts, except the commodores and a few noblemen."

"Faith, but that's no reason at all, at all, why I shouldn't!" exclaimed our Hibernian friend, drawing himself up; "and, what's more, I intend to go in spite of their neglect."

We laughed, as usual, at his unexampled conceit; but fancying that he was joking, we thought no more about the matter. He soon took his departure, carrying off Groggs, who had conceived a high respect for him. O'Wiggins had promised to conduct him to the feet of the fair Eulalie, which was an additional temptation to the poor man. Never, perhaps, was there so much paying and receiving of visits as there was in the course of the day. The yachtsmen paid visits to each other, and then to the men-of-war; and to do the French officers justice, they treated us with the very greatest attention. I must say that all the French naval officers I have met are as gentlemanly a set of fellows as I know: they are highly scientific, and as brave as any men one would wish to meet.

It appeared as if all the inhabitants and visitors of Cherbourg were on the water also paying visits; and a

report having got abroad that the owners of the English yachts were happy to show their vessels to all comers, we were all day long surrounded by visitors. The general joke was to send them all off to O'Wiggins's craft, the 'Popple.' Her cabins were, certainly, very gaudily and attractively furnished. It was hinted to the townspeople that he was a very important person, and that he would be highly offended if his vessel was not the first honoured by their presence. O'Wiggins was at first highly flattered with the attention paid him, and had actually prepared luncheon for the first comers; but he soon discovered that he had more guests than he could accommodate, and in a little time he was almost overwhelmed with visitors, who, for hours after, crowded his cabins, without a possibility of his getting free of them. Among others, while Groggs was on board, came the fair Eulalie and her respectable sire, habited in the costume of the National Guard, and looking very military and dignified. Groggs hurriedly advanced to receive the lovely maid; her surprise equalled his delight; when O'Wiggins stepped out from an inner cabin. There was a mutual start and a look of recognition, and Eulalie sank back, almost fainting, into the arms paternal, open to receive her, while, with a look which would have annihilated any man but O'Wiggins, she exclaimed the single word,

"*Perfide!*" M. de Marabout, with paternal solicitude, endeavoured to remove his daughter to the fresh air of the deck, but she recovered without that assistance, and exhibited signs unmistakable of a wish to abstract one or both of the eyes of the O'Wiggins from his head.

"What means all this, my dear sir?" inquired Groggs, with a somewhat faltering voice, for suspicions most unpleasant were beginning to take possession of his imagination.

"Ask the lady," replied O'Wiggins, looking out for a mode to secure his retreat.

The lady saw that he was cowed, which of course gave her courage; so, releasing herself from her father, she sprang towards him. The skylight hatchway was the only available outlet; so he sprang on the table, and from thence was endeavouring to leap on deck, when she caught him by the leg. He struggled hard —for expose himself to her fury he dared not, and he did not like to summon his people to his assistance. At last he was obliged to do so; when as the seamen, with shouts of laughter, were hauling him up, off came his shoe and a piece of his trousers; and he was spirited away and stowed safely in the forepeak before the irate damsel could gain the deck, where she instantly hastened in the hopes of catching him. Of the dis-

tracted and astounded Groggs, Eulalie took no further notice, and having in vain sought for the object of her fierce anger, whom she supposed to have escaped in a boat to the shore, she and her father and friends took their departure, and Groggs saw his beloved no more. How O'Wiggins had thus mortally offended the damsel remains a secret; for communicative as he was on most subjects, he took very good care on this matter not to enlighten any of us.

When O'Wiggins discovered that Eulalie was in reality gone, he retired to his cabin, to compose himself and to change his tattered garments for a magnificent uniform of some corps of fencibles, or militia, or yeomanry, of which he professed to be colonel; the said uniform being added to and improved according to his own taste and design, till it rivalled in magnificence that of a Hungarian field-marshal, or a city lieutenant's.

We had been giving the ladies a pull about the harbour, and were passing the 'Popple,' when her owner made his appearance on deck. The previous account, it must be understood, we received afterwards from Groggs, who recounted it with a simple pathos worthy of a despairing lover. On his head, O'Wiggins wore a huge cocked-hat, surmounted by a magnificent plume of feathers, which, waving in the wind, had a

truly martial and imposing appearance, while the glittering bullion which profusely covered his dress could not fail of attracting the notice of all beholders. With the air of a monarch he stepped into his gig, which was alongside, manned by a grinning crew, and seizing the yoke-lines, he directed her head up the harbour. He was too much engrossed by his own new-fledged dignity to observe us, so we followed him at a respectful distance, to watch his movements. The boats of all descriptions made way for him as he advanced, and the men-of-war's boats saluted, every one taking him for a foreign prince, or an ambassador, or a field-marshal, at least. At length he reached the quay, and with a truly princely air he stepped on shore, taking off his plumed hat, and bowing to the admiring and wondering crowds who stood there to welcome him. A space was instantly cleared to allow full scope for the wave of his cocked-hat, and as he advanced, the crowd made way, bowing to him as he progressed. In execrable French he signified his wish to know the way to the mayor's hotel, where the banquet was to be held; and an officious official instantly thereon, perceiving the gestures of the great unknown, stepped forward, and, profoundly bowing, advanced before him.

"Some dreadful mistake has doubtlessly occurred, and by an oversight which no one but I can remedy,

no one has been deputed to conduct the prince to the banquet. For the honour of my country I'll tell a lie.' So thought the patriotic official, as he observed, in an obsequious tone, "I have been deputed, mon prince, by monsieur the mayor, who deeply regrets that his multifarious duties prevent him from coming in person to conduct you to the banqueting-hall, where the great President of the great French republic will have the satisfaction of meeting you."

"I am highly pleased at the mayor's attention," answered O'Wiggins, with an additional flourish of his hat, and wondering all the time whom he could be taken for, that he might the better act his part. "A prince, at all events, I am, and that's something," he thought; so he walked on, smiling and bowing as before.

Of all nations in the world, the French are certainly the greatest admirers of a uniform, and the most easily humbugged by any one who will flatter their vanity; and certainly republicans are the greatest worshippers of titles. On walked the great O'Wiggins, admired equally by the vieux moustache of the Imperial Guard, by the peasant-girl, with her high balloon starched cap, by the dapper grisette, by real soldiers of the line, by shopkeeping national guards, by citizen gentlemen and ladies in plain clothes, and the queer-shaped seamen

and boatmen, of whom I have before spoken. His step was firm and confident as he approached the hall, and as he got near, he saw with dismay that the guests arriving in crowds before him were admitted by tickets. This we also observed, and fully expected to have seen him turned back, shorn of his honours, amid the shouts of the populace. But the knowing doorkeeper, equally knowing as the officious official, who now, with a glance of pride, announced him, could not dream of insulting a prince by asking him for his ticket, and only bowed the lower as he advanced, he bestowing on them in return some of his most gracious nods. The act was accomplished. He was safe in the banqueting hall; but still there might be a turn in the tide of his affairs; some one who knew him might possibly ask how he had managed to get there, and the mayor might request his absence. But O'Wiggins was too true a disciple of St. Impudentia thus to lose the ground he had gained. Having begun with blusters and bold confidence, he now called in meek humility and modest bashfulness with an abundant supply of blarney. Stowing away his cocked-hat in a safe corner, he retired among a crowd of betinselled officials, and earnestly entered into conversation with them, expatiating largely on his satisfaction at the sight he had that day witnessed, assuring his hearers that in Turkey, Russia, or America, or any

other of the many countries he had visited, he had never seen anything to equal the magnificence he had beheld in this important part of *la belle* France. He endeavoured also to bend down, so as to hide his diminished head among the crowd, and thus, as he had calculated, more wisely than a well-known wise man we have heard of, he passed undetected.

Dinner being announced as served, he found himself, much against his will, forced upwards close to the English naval officers and yacht commodores; but by a still further exertion of humility he contrived to take his seat a few persons off from those who knew him, and might put awkward questions. The French, however, could not fail to admire the admirable modesty of the foreign prince, and the liberals set it down to the score of his respect for republican institutions, while the royalists fancied that he was afraid of presuming on his rank before his republican host. From the information I could gain, and from his own account afterwards, his impudence carried him through the affair with flying colours, for no one detected him, though many wondered who he was; and even some who were acquainted with him by sight, failed to recognise the O'Wiggins in the gaily-decked *militaire* before them.

Having seen him enter the hall, we returned on board the 'Fun,' to give an account of what had hap-

pened to our fair friends; and of course we did not fail of making a good story of the affair, and surmising that O'Wiggins would be discovered and compelled to strip off his feathers. After dinner we prepared to go to the ball, to which the ladies wisely would not venture. Poor Groggs was very downcast at the events of the morning, and with the discovery that he could never hope to make the fair Eulalie Mrs. Groggs. As we were going on shore we met O'Wiggins pulling off in his gig with four highly bedecked officers of National Guards, whom he had invited to visit the yacht. He had selected them for the gayness of their uniforms, which he fancied betokened their exalted rank. They had discovered that he was not a prince; but still were under the impression that he was at least a Mi Lord Anglais, imbued with liberal principles. He nodded condescendingly to us as he passed.

"I'm going to show my craft to these officers whom I brought from the banquet, and I'll be back soon at the ball," he exclaimed, with a look of triumph.

It is understood—for I cannot vouch for the truth of the statement—that he made the officers very drunk, and then changing his gay uniform for his usual yacht dress coat, he made his appearance at the ball, where he boasted of the polite manner in which the President had asked him to the banquet, quoting all the speeches

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which had been made, and many other particulars, so that no one doubted that he was there.

The ball-room was crowded to suffocation, and dancing was out of the question. I looked at the President with interest. The last time I had seen him was in a London ball-room, and at supper I had sat opposite to him and his cousin, the very image of their uncle. At that time, neither had more influence in the world than I or any other humble person. They were little lions, because they had the blood in their veins of the most extraordinary man our times has known; but any Indian from the East, with a jewelled turban, created more interest. Now I beheld the same man the head of a nation—the observed of all observers—dispensing his courtesies with a truly regal air. One could not help feeling that there must be more of his uncle's spirit in the man than one was before inclined to suppose. A considerable number of ladies' dresses and men's coats were torn, and purses and handkerchiefs abstracted from pockets, and the ball terminated. I have not given a very lucid description of it; but a crush in England is so very like a crush in France, that my readers who have endured one may easily picture the other.

Mrs. Mizen and her charges were anxious to sail to get back to Plymouth for Sunday, but we induced them

to stop till the afternoon, by promising them to accompany them, that they might see the President visit the fleet, which it was understood he was to do on Saturday. The day was lovely, and every craft afloat, from the big 'Valmy' to the smallest yacht, did her best to look gay, and to add to the brilliancy of the scene. The piers were crowded with people, and so were the decks of the vessels and boats and barges laden with passengers which were moving in every direction. It was amusing to watch the numerous parties on board the steamers at their meals: those forward indulging in bread and cheese and sausages, and vin ordinaire or beer; the more aristocratic aft in chicken-pies, hams, champagne, and claret, in which beverages they drank prosperity to the republic and long life to the President, though they would as readily have toasted a king or an emperor. It was a day of excitement. The first thing in the morning there was a pulling-match, but who was the winner I am unable to say. Then the President paid a visit to the dockyard, and from that time every one was on the tiptoe of expectation to catch a glimpse of him as he pulled off to the ships-of-war he purposed visiting.

At length he appeared in a state barge of blue and white and gold, and prow and stern raised and carved richly, which floated as proudly as that of any Lord

Mayor of London, from Whittington downward; for not altogether dissimilar was she in appearance. She pulled twenty-four oars, and a captain stood by the coxswain to con her. Under a canopy of purple cloth, the colour reminding one of imperial dignity, sat the President of the republic, a tricolor flag waving in the bow from a lofty flagstaff, speaking, however, loudly of republicanism. As his galley shot out of the dockyard, there burst forth from the mouth of every cannon on board the ships and in every fort on shore, roars most tremendous, flashes of flame, and clouds of smoke. Never had I before heard such a wild, terrific uproar; crash followed crash, till it appeared that every soul afloat or on shore must be annihilated.

Thundering away went the guns, every ship firing every gun she had as fast as she could, and every fort doing the same. Bang—crash, crash, crash. The ladies stopped their ears, and looked as if they wished themselves well out of it. It appeared as if a fierce battle were raging, while the ships, and the batteries, and the shore, were shrouded by a dense mass of smoke. On a sudden the firing ceased, the smoke blew away, revealing once more the masts and rigging of the ships-of-war, now crowded with men in the act of laying out on the yards. The crews cheered, and the bands of all the ships struck up martial music,

which floated joyfully over the water, and one could not help fancying that something very important was taking place. In reality, it was only a *coup d'état*—Prince Napoleon was trying to supplant Prince de Joinville in the affections of the seamen of France. It is said that he made himself very popular, and gained golden opinions from all classes of men.

His first visit was to the 'Friedland,' the flag-ship of Admiral Deschenes, then to the 'Valmy,' and next to 'Minerve,' the gunnery-ship, on the same plan as our 'Excellent.' Here some practice took place, but I cannot say that the firing was anything out of the way good. Having inspected his own ships, he paid a visit to Lord Wilton's beautiful schooner, the 'Xarifa,' and afterwards to the 'Enchantress,' Lord Cardigan's yacht, both perfect vessels of their kind. We yachtsmen had, indeed, reason to feel not a little proud of the display made by our peaceable crafts on the occasion.

Perhaps it may have occurred to the mind of some Frenchmen, who looked with boastful eyes on their proud war-ships, if these sons of perfidious Albion can make such a display with their pleasure-boats, what will they do if they get into earnest, and fit out a national fleet of big ships and steamers? Unfortunately, however, there is that indomitable self-suffi-

ciency and pride in the composition of Frenchmen that they cannot be convinced of our superiority at sea, and will, to a certainty, on the first favourable opportunity, try to pay off old scores.

I do not say this from any dislike to the French, but being in an economical, or rather a utilitarian, mood, I wish they would sensibly reduce their squadron to dimensions suited to the wants of peaceable people, and allow us to employ our ships in carrying emigrants, putting down the slave-trade, and taking care of our interests in various parts of the world. I only hope, if they ever do go to war with us again, that we shall not let them rest till we have sunk every one of their ships, and burnt and destroyed every dockyard and arsenal on their coasts, so as to put it for the future out of their power to threaten us. That dockyard at Cherbourg is a sore subject with me. It puts me too much in mind of a man's fist held up to my nose to be pleasant. It is a doubled fist near John Bull's nose, let him depend on that, and one that will strike very hard, if he ever shuts his eyes and has not his own knuckles ready.

We went on board several of the French ships, and were much struck with their beauty, cleanliness, and order, while every improvement which science has suggested has been introduced on board them. We

were not particularly prepossessed in favour of the French seamen, either on shore or on board. There was a roughness in their manner which savoured somewhat of national dislike, fostered for sinister purposes, to be pleasant; or, if it was put on in imitation of the manners of our own honest Jack Tars, all I can say is, that it was a very bad imitation indeed, and about as unlike the truth as when they attempt to represent the English national character on the stage.

From the French officers all who visited their ships received the very greatest attention and courtesy. We sailed that afternoon, as soon as the spectacle was over, in company with the 'Fun.' I cannot, therefore, describe the ball, with its overpowering heat and crush, which took place that evening, nor the sham-fight, when the boats of the squadron attacked the steamer 'Descartes,' nor the evolutions of the fleet, nor the awful expenditure of gunpowder from the ships, sufficient to make the economical hearts of the men of Manchester sink dismayed within their bosoms. Oh, friends! think you this expenditure of gunpowder and noise breathes the spirit of peace? Oh, merchants, manufacturers, and calculators well versed in addition and subtraction, is it not worth while to employ some portion of our own income, even a large portion maybe, to insure old England against any freak our volatile

neighbours may take into their heads? We have heard that the descendants of the Crusaders were, not long ago, talking largely of winning infidel Britain to become the humble servant of a certain personage who manages, by aid of our volatile friends' bayonets, to sit, somewhat uneasily perhaps, in a chair in which St. Peter it is said once sat. We live in the nineteenth century, and therefore neither the nonsense spoken by the Crusaders' descendants, nor by the developers of religion, nor by any Father Ignatius alive, nor by our Manchester friends, affect us much, nor destroy our night's repose; but they serve, nevertheless, to show the *animus* of the speakers, and therefore would we wisely guard against them, for fools, if allowed to go on in their foolery, or knaves in their knavery, are apt to prove dangerous in the end. But I have done with public affairs. The 'Frolic' and the 'Fun' danced gaily together over the starlit ocean towards Plymouth, wind and tide favouring us. The voices of our fair friends, as they sung in concert some delicious airs, sounded across the water most sweetly to our ears. What a contrast to the loud roar of the cannon in the morning, and the glare and bustle of Cherbourg harbour, did that quiet evening present!

We arrived safe in Plymouth at an early hour next day. I am happy to say that, not long after, I received

cards with silver ties from my friends Mr. and Mrs. Jack Mizen; but I think it right to announce to the spinster world that Groggs, Porpoise, Bubble, and I, are still bachelors.

CHAPTER IX.

PREPARATIONS FOR A LONG CRUISE. — HEARTY CONFESSES TO A SOFT IMPEACHMENT.—THE O'WIGGINS AND HIS PASSENGERS.—HOW WE GOT RID OF THEM.

HEARTY had long projected a voyage up the Mediterranean, and invited Carstairs, and Bubble, and me to join him. Groggs, as may be supposed, had become a bore, unbearable; and, as soon as we arrived at Plymouth, had been sent back to cultivate his paternal acres and describe the wonders he had seen during his nautical career. While Porpoise was attending to the refitting of the yacht, Bubble and I were busily engaged in laying in stores of comestibles and drinkables, and burnables and smokables of all sorts. Food for the mind, as well as for the body, was not forgotten; but Hearty would not allow a pack of cards or dice on board. It was a fancy of his, he said, that he did not much mind being peculiar. "If a set of men with heads on their shoulders and brains in their heads cannot

amuse themselves, unless by the aid of means invented for the use of idiots, and fit only for the half-witted, I would rather dispense with their society," he used to observe. We had, however, chess and draughts, though he was no great admirer of either game, especially of the latter. "However," as he said, "though those games kill time which I think it would be wise of men if they tried to keep alive, as they, at all events, won't let a fellow's mind go to sleep, we may as well have them."

We exerted all our ingenuity and thought in laying in everything which could possibly be required for a long voyage; and seldom has a yacht, I suspect, been better found in that respect. Seldom, also, have five jolly bachelors been brought together more ready to enjoy themselves. Three is generally considered the best number to form a travelling party, and certainly on shore no party should exceed that number, unless there is some stronger bond of union than mere pleasure or convenience. Seldom when more men unite do they fail to separate before the end of the journey. For a yacht voyage, however, the case is different. In the first place there is more discipline. The owner, if he is a man of judgment, assumes a certain amount of mild authority; acts as captain over every one on board, and keeps order.

Should a dispute arise, he instantly reconciles the disputants, and takes care himself never to dispute with any one.

Hearty was just the man for the occasion. "Now, my dear fellows," said he, to all the party on giving us the invitation, "the first thing we have to do is to sign articles to preserve good fellowship, and to do our best to make each other happy. I don't want to top the officer over my guests; but all I want you to promise me is, that if there arises any difference, you will allow me at once to be umpire. If I differ with any one, the rest must act the part of judge and jury." We, of course, were all too happy to agree to so reasonable a proposal, and so the matter was settled. With respect also to the numbers on board, in reality only Hearty and Carstairs were idlers; Porpoise was officially master; Bubble had originally fitted out the yacht, and acted as caterer; while I had undertaken to keep my watch, and aid Will in his duties. We had with us guns and ammunition, and fishing-rods and nets, and camera-lucidas, and sketch-books; and musical instruments, flutes, a violin, a guitar, and accordion. We had even some scientific apparatus; nor had we forgotten a good supply of writing-materials. The truth was, that both Bubble and I had some claim to be authors.

Will had written a good deal: indeed, his prolific pen had often supplied him with the means of paying his tailor's bill; while I had more than once appeared in print. We agreed, therefore, not to interfere with one another in our literary compositions. While he took one department, I was to take the other. At last we were all ready for sea. Mizen came out in the 'Fun' to see us off, with Fanny Farlie, Miss Mizen, Mr. and Mrs. Rullock, and Susan Simms on board, as well as several of our friends, and we struck up, as the yachts at length parted, with our voices and all the musical instruments we could bring into action, "The Girls we leave behind us." Hearty heaved a sigh as he was looking through his glass at the fast-receding 'Fun.'

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"Yes, she is a sweet girl!" he ejaculated, not answering me, however. I spoke again.

"Laura Mizen, to be sure," he replied. "Who else? She's unlike all the rest of our yachting set away at Ryde there. They are all young ladies, cast in the same mould, differing only in paint, outside show; one may be blue and the other red, another yellow, though I don't think you often find them of any primitive colour; generally they are of secondary, or mixed colours, as the artists say. One

again wishes to be thought fast, and another sentimental, another philanthropic or religious, and another literary. I don't know which of the pretenders I dislike the most. The fast young ladies are the most difficult to deal with. They do say such impudent things, both to one and of one. If they knew how some of the fast men speak of them in return, it would make them wince not a little, I suspect, if they have not rattled away from all delicacy themselves. Oh, give me a right honest, good girl, who does not dream of being anything but herself; who is a dutiful daughter, and is ready to be a loving, obedient wife of an honest man, and the affectionate mother of some fine hearty children, whom she may bring up with a knowledge of the object for which they were sent into the world."

"Well said, my dear fellow," I answered, warmly; for I seriously responded to his sentiments, though, it must be confessed they were very different to the style which had been usual on board the 'Frolic.' "Why did you not ask her, though?" I continued.

"Because I was a fool," he answered. "Those Rattler girls, Masons and Sandons, and that Miss Mary Masthead, and others of her stamp, were running in my head, and I couldn't believe that Laura Mizen was in reality superior to them. I used to

talk the same nonsense to her that I rattled into their willing ears; and it is only now that I have thought over the replies she made, and many things she lately said to me, that I have discovered the vast difference there is between her and the rest."

"Well, about ship, and propose," said I; "though sorry to lose the cruise, your happiness shall be the first consideration."

"Oh, no! no! that will never do," he answered. "I doubt if she will have me now. When we come back next summer I will find her out, and if she appears to receive me favourably, I will propose. Now she thinks me only a harum-scarum rattler. It would never do."

I could say nothing to this. I truly believed that though Hearty's fortune would weigh with most girls, it would but little with her; and I could only hope that in the mean time she would not bestow her affections on any one else.

Just as we got outside the breakwater we sighted a schooner, standing in for the Sound, which we had no difficulty in making out to be the 'Popple.' As soon as she discovered us she bore down on us, signalizing away as rapidly as possible.

"What are they saying?" asked Hearty, as he saw the bunting run up to her mast-head. "Heave-to, I want

to speak to you," I answered, turning over the leaves of the signal-book.

"Shall we?" asked Porpoise.

"Oh, by all means," replied Hearty. "O'Wiggins may have something of importance to communicate."

"Down with the helm; let fly the jib-sheet; haul the foresail up to windward," sung out Porpoise, and the cutter lay bobbing her head gracefully to the sea, while the schooner approached her.

Still they continued running up and down the bunting on board the 'Popple.' I had some difficulty in making out what they intended to say. "Ladies aboard—trust to—gallantry," I continued to interpret, as I made out the words by reference to the book.

"What can they wish to say?" exclaimed Hearty.

"They wish to lay an embargo on us of some sort, and begin by complimenting us on our gallantry," observed Bubble.

"By the pricking of my thumbs, something evil this way comes," exclaimed Carstairs: "as I am a living gentleman there are petticoats on board. "Who has been acting the part of a perfidious wretch, and breaking tender vows? An avenging Nemesis is in his wake in the person of Mrs. Skyscraper, or the Rattler girls, or Mary Masthead. Even at this distance, I can make them out." So it was, as the schooner ap-

proached, the very dames Carstairs had named were seen on board.

We had observed, as we went down the Sound, a large schooner beating up from the westward. There had been discussions as to what she was. Our glasses had now once more been turned towards her, when we discovered her to be the 'Sea Eagle.' Seeing our bunting going up and down so rapidly, Sir Charles Drummore, her owner, curious to know what we were talking about, stood towards us.

The 'Popple' hove-to to windward of us, and a boat being lowered, O'Wiggins pulled on board. "My dear fellow, I'm so glad we've overtaken you," he began. "Your friend, Mrs. Skyscraper, and those young ladies with her, were so anxious to have another cruise on board the 'Frolic' before the summer is over, that I consented to bring them down here, as I made sure that you would be delighted to see them!" Never did Hearty's face assume a more puzzled and vexed expression. "Heaven defend me from them!" he exclaimed. "Tell them that we've got the yellow fever, —or the plague, or the cholera, or the measles or the hooping-cough, or anything dreadful you can think of; make every excuse—or no excuse, the thing is impossible, not to be thought of for a moment: they can't come. We are bound foreign, say to the North,

Pole, or the West Indies, or the coast of Africa, or the South Pacific, or to the Antipodes. They don't want to go there, at all events, I suppose."

"But if you don't take them, what am I to do with them?" exclaimed O'Wiggins. "I'm bound down Channel, and if they don't worry me out of house and home, they'll drive me overboard with the very clatter of their tongues."

A bright thought struck Hearty. Just then the 'Sea Eagle' came up and hove-to on our quarter.

"Much obliged to you for your kind intentions towards us, but, instead, just hand them over to Drummore," said he, rubbing his hands. "If any man can manage so delicate an affair you can, O'Wiggins, without wishing to pay you an undue compliment."

Sir Charles Drummore was a baronet, one of our yachting acquaintances, and had lately purchased the 'Sea Eagle.' A worthy old fellow, though he had the character of being somewhat of a busybody. He certainly looked more in his place in his club than on board his yacht.

"Well, I'll try it," answered the O'Wiggins, who was himself easily won by the very bait he offered so liberally to others. "Trust me, I'll do it if mortal man can. I'll weave a piteous tale of peerless damsels in distress, and all that sort of thing: thank you for the hint, it will take, depend on it."

"Well, be quick about it," we exclaimed, "or Drummore will be topping his boom, and you will miss your chance." Thereon O'Wiggins tumbled into his boat, and pulled aboard the 'Sea Eagle.' What story he told,—what arguments he used,—we never heard; but very shortly we had the satisfaction of seeing the Misses Rattler and Mary Masthead, with their skittish chaperone, Mrs. Skyscraper, transferred to the deck of the 'Sea Eagle.'

We strongly suspected that the prim baronet had not the slightest conception as to who formed the component parts of the company with whom he was to be favoured. He bowed rather stiffly as he received them and their band-boxes on deck; but he was in for it; his gallantry would not allow him to send them back to the 'Popple,' and he had, therefore, only to wish sincerely for a fair breeze, that he might land them as speedily as possible at Ryde. The O'Wiggins waved his cap with an extra amount of vehemence, and putting up his helm, and easing off his sheets, stood away for Falmouth. We, at the same time, shaped a course down Channel, mightily glad that we were free of all fast young ladies and flirting widows,—

"O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea,
Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,
Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,
Survey our empire, and behold our home!"

Spouted Carstairs, pointing to the wide Atlantic which rolled before us,—

> 'The sea, the sea, the open sea—!
> The wide, the blue, the ever free;
> Without a mark, without a bound,
> It runneth the earth's wide region round!
> I'm on the sea—
> I am where I would ever be:
> With the blue above, and the blue below,
> And silence wheresoe'er I go,'

Chimed in Hearty, whose quotations and sketches of songs were always from authors of more modern date.

"You'll sing different songs to those, gentlemen, if it comes on to blow a gale of wind while we are crossing the Bay," said Porpoise, laughing. "The sea always puts me in mind of a woman, very delightful when she's calm and smiling, but very much the contrary when a gale is blowing. I've knocked about all my life at sea, and have got pretty tired of storms, which I don't like a bit better than when I first went afloat."

"Never fear for us," answered Hearty. "I never was in a storm in my life, and I want to see how the 'Frolic' will behave."

"As to that, I dare say she will behave well enough," said Porpoise. "There's no craft like a cutter for lying to, or for beating off a lee shore;

or working through a narrow channel, for that matter, though a man-of-war man says it. We have the credit of preferring our own square-rigged vessels to all others, and not knowing how to handle a fore-and-after."

"Come what may, we'll trust to you to do the best which can be done under any chances which may occur," said Hearty. "And now here comes Ladle to summon us to dinner." To dinner we went, and a good one we ate, and many a good one after it. Many a joke was uttered, many a story told, and many a song was sung. In truth, the days slipped away more rapidly even than on shore.

"Well, after all, I can't say that there is much romance in a sea life," exclaimed Carstairs, stretching out his legs, as he leaned back in an arm-chair on deck, and allowed the smoke of his fragrant Havannah to rise curling over his upturned countenance, for there was very little wind at the time, and from what there was we were running away.

"I can't quite agree with you on that point: there is romance enough at sea, as well as everywhere else, if people only know how to look for it," observed Will Bubble, who had been scribbling away most assiduously all the morning in a large note-book which he kept carefully closed from vulgar eyes.

"Oh, I know, of course, 'Books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything,'" answered Carstairs, who was seldom at a loss for a quotation from Shakspeare. "But I mean, whoever meets a good, exciting, romantic adventure with pirate-smugglers, savages, or something of that sort? Perhaps you, Bubble, have got something of that sort in your book there which you will give us, but then it will be only fiction: I want a stern reality. The world has grown too matter-of-fact to keep a fellow awake."

"I'll own to the soft impeachment," answered Bubble, laughing. "But my story's real; I've been merely putting some notes into form for our amusement, and I hope all hands will be duly grateful." We all thanked Bubble for his promise.

"I cannot agree with you, in any way, as to there being no romance in a sea-life," said I. "Only last year I took part in a very pretty little bit of romance, which would have made the fortune of any paper into which it had been allowed to find its way; but for the sake of the actors we kept the affair a profound secret, or you would certainly have heard of it."

"Let's have it all out now," exclaimed Hearty; "we won't peach: we'll be as tight as the 'Frolic' herself."

"I wouldn't trust you in the club," said I. "But, out here, I don't think it will go beyond the

bulwarks, so you shall hear my story." While the rest of our party sat round, and drew, or netted, or smoked, I gave an account of the incident to which I alluded. As it is an important introduction to our subsequent adventures, it is, I feel, well worthy of a chapter to itself.

CHAPTER X.

WHY A BACHELOR TOOK TO YACHTING.—THE RIVAL SUITORS.—A DOUBTFUL CHARACTER.

AWAKENED one morning towards the close of the last London season by the postman's rap, my friend Harcourt found, on reading his letters, that he had become the owner of the 'Amethyst' cutter, and a member of the Royal —— Yacht Club. Possessing an independent fortune, a large circle of acquaintance, several staunch friends, and few enemies, he ought to have been a happy man—but he was not. The fact is, he did not know what to do with himself. He had travelled not only over the Continent, but had visited the three other quarters of the globe. He had gone through several London seasons, and run the rounds of innumerable country-houses where there were marriageable daughters, but had neither fallen in love, nor been drawn into a proposal. In truth, he believed

with his friends that he was not a marrying man. He had become heartily sick of dusty roads, passage-steamers, hot rooms, dissipation, and manœuvring mammas, when I, who had of old been his mess-mate, recommended him to try yachting for the summer.

"What, go to sea for pleasure?" he exclaimed, in a tone of contempt. "You surely cannot suggest such a folly. I had enough of it when I was a poor young middy, and obliged to buffet the rude winds and waves: but—"

"Well; think about it," were the last words I uttered as I left him.

He *did* think about it, and thought, too, perhaps, he might like it. He was not a novice, for he had for some years of his existence served his country in the exalted capacity of a midshipman; but on succeeding, by the death of an elder brother and an uncle, to some few thousands a year, he magnanimously determined, by the advice of his lady mother, not to stand in the way of the promotion of any of his brother officers, and retired from the career of glory he was following. I cannot say that the thoughts of leaving his profession gave him much regret, particularly as being too old to return to school, and too ignorant of Latin and Greek to think of the university, he was henceforth to be his

own master. If now and then he acknowledged to himself that he might have been a happier man with a pursuit in life, I cannot say—I am not moralizing. So much for his past life.

After I left him he meditated on the subject I had suggested, he told me; and the next time we met, we talked it over, and as I was going down to Portsmouth, he gave me *carte blanche* to buy a vessel for him, there not being time to build one. This letter communicated the result of my search. Having made himself master of this and a few other bits of information, he turned round, as was his custom after reading his letters, to sleep off the weariness of body and mind with which he had lately been afflicted, but as he lay dozing on his luxurious couch, visions of the 'Amethyst' flitted across his brain. A light graceful craft, as she probably was, with a broad spread of white canvas, gliding like some lovely spirit over the blue ocean. "Who shall sail with me," he thought. "Brine, of course. Where shall we go? When shall we start? What adventures shall we probably encounter? How shall I again like to find myself on the surface of the fickle sea?" The case, however, from the Then and the Now was widely different. Then he was a midshipman, in a cockpit, at the beck and order of a dozen or twenty masters. Now he was to enjoy

a command independent of the Admiralty and their sealed orders, admirals, or senior captains. His own will and the winds and tides the only powers he was to obey.

"By Jove! there is something worth living for," he exclaimed, as he jumped out of bed. "I'll forswear London forthwith. I'll hurry off from its scheming and heartlessness, its emptiness and frivolity. I'll go afloat at once. Brine is right. He's a capital fellow. It was a bright idea. I'll try first how I like Channel cruising. I can always come on shore if it bores me. If I find it pleasant, I'll buy a larger craft next year. I'll go up the Straits, perhaps out to visit my friend Brooke at Borneo, and round the world."

He bathed, breakfasted, drove to his tailor's, looked in at the Carlton and the Conservative, fulfilled a dinner engagement, and in the evening went to three parties, at all of which places he astonished his acquaintances by the exuberance of his spirits.

"The fact is," he answered, to their inquiries as by what wonderful means the sudden change had been wrought, "I've broken my trammels. I'm off. A few days hence and London shall know me no more. To be plain, I'm going to turn marine monster, don a monkey-jacket, cultivate a beard, wear a tar-

paulin hat, smoke cigars, and put my hands in my pockets. We shall meet again at Cowes, Torquay, Plymouth, or one of the other salt-water places. Till then, *au revoir*."

As he was entering Lady L——'s door, who should he meet coming out but his old friend O'Malley, whom he had not seen for ages! He knew that his regiment had just come back from India, so he was not very much surprised. He took his arm and he returned into the rooms with him. Now, O'Malley was an excellent fellow, agreeable, accomplished, and possessed of a fund of good spirits, which nothing could ruffle. He was, indeed, a good specimen of an Irish gentleman. He sang a good song, told a good story, and made friends wherever he went. Such was just the man under every circumstance for a *compagnon de voyage*. He hesitated not a moment in inviting him, and, to his infinite satisfaction, he at once accepted the offer.

A week after he had become the owner of the 'Amethyst,' O'Malley and he were seated in a Southampton railroad carriage, on their way to Cowes, where she was fitting out under my inspection. In the division opposite to them sat a little man whom they at once perceived to belong to the genus snob. He had a comical little face of his own, lighted by a pair

of round eyes, with a meaningless expression, fat cheeks, a somewhat large open mouth, and a pug nose with large nostrils.

"Beg pardon, sir," he observed to O'Malley, on whose countenance he saw a smile playing, which encouraged him. "Hope I don't interrupt the perusal of your paper? Ah, no—concluded—topped off with births, deaths, marriages, and advertisements. See mine there soon. Don't mean an advertisement, nor my birth, ha! ha! ha! too old a bird for that; nor death, you may suppose; I mean t'other—eh, you twig? coming the tender, wooing and wedding—hope soon to fix the day:"—suddenly he turned round to Harcourt—"Reading the 'Daily'—? Ah, no, the 'Times,' I see.—Any news, sir?"

They did look at him with astonishment, but, at the same time, were so amused that, of course, they humoured the little man. Harcourt, therefore, unfroze, and smiling, offered him the paper.

"Oh dear! many thanks, didn't want it," he answered; "can't read in a railroad, afraid to interrupt you before you'd finished. Going down to the sea, I suppose?—So am I. Abroad, perhaps?—I'm not. Got a yacht?—national amusement. Sail about the Wight?—pretty scenery, smooth water, I'm told. Young lady, fond of boating,—sure way to win her

heart. Come it strong—squeeze her hand, can't get away. Eh, see I'm up to a trick or two."

In this absurdly vulgar style he ran on, while they stared, wondering who he could be. Finding that they said nothing, he began again.

"Fond of yachting, gentlemen?"

"I believe so," answered Harcourt.

"So am I.—Got a yacht?" he asked.

Harcourt nodded.

"What's her name?"

Harcourt told him.

"Mine's the 'Dido.' Pretty name, isn't it, short and sweet? Dido was Queen of Sheba, you know—ran away with Ulysses, the Trojan hero, and then killed herself with an adder because he wouldn't marry her. Learned all that when I was at school. She's at Southampton, but I belong to the club. Only twenty-five tons—little, but good. Not a clipper I own—staunch and steady, that's my motto. Warwick Ribbons has always a welcome for his friends. That's me, at your service. Christened Warwick from the great Guy. Rough it now and then. You won't mind that. Eggs and bacon, and a plain chop, but weeds and liquor *ad lib.* Brother yachtsmen, you know. Bond of union." They winced a little. "Shall meet often I hope, as my father used to say each time he passed the

bottle. David Ribbons was his name. Good man. Merchant in the City. Cut up well. Left me and brother Barnabas a mint of money. Barnabas sticks to trade. I've cut it. Made a lucky spec in railroads, and am flaring up a bit. Here we are at the end of our journey," he exclaimed as the train stopped at Southampton. "We shall meet again on board the 'Dido.' Remember me. Warwick Ribbons, you know—good-bye, good-bye." And before they were aware of his friendly intentions, he had grasped them both warmly by the hand. "I must see after my goods—my trunks, I mean." So saying, he set off to overtake the porter who was wheeling away his traps.

Harcourt never felt more inclined to give way to a hearty fit of laughter, and O'Malley indulged himself to his heart's content.

In an hour after this they were steaming down the Southampton Water on their way to Cowes. Just as they got clear of the pier they again beheld their friend, Warwick Ribbons, on the deck of a remarkably ugly little red-bottomed cutter, which they had no doubt was the 'Dido.' He recognized them, apparently, for, holding on by the rigging, he jumped on the gunwale, waving his hat vehemently to draw their attention and that of the other passengers to himself and his craft, but of course they did not consider it necessary to

acknowledge his salute. This vexed him, for he turned round and kicked a dirty-looking boy, which also served to let everybody know that he was master of the 'Dido.' The boy uttered a howl and ran forward, little Ribbons following him round and round the deck, repeating the dose as long as they could see him.

I was the first person they met on landing at Cowes, and Harcourt, having introduced O'Malley to me, we repaired to the 'Amethyst,' lying off White's Yard. We pulled round her twice, to examine her thoroughly before we went on board. He was not disappointed in her, for though smaller than he could have wished—she measured sixty tons—she was a perfect model of symmetry and beauty. She was also so well fitted within that she had accommodation equal to many vessels of nearly twice her size.

Three days more passed, and the 'Amethyst' was stored, provisioned, and reported ready for sea. Harcourt's spirits rose to an elevation he had not experienced for years, as, on one of the most beautiful mornings of that beautiful season, his craft, with a light wind from the southward, glided out of Cowes harbour.

"What a wonderful effect has the pure fresh air, after the smoke and heat of London!" exclaimed O'Malley. "Let me once inhale the real salt breeze, and I shall commit a thousand unthought-of vagaries,

and so will you, let me tell you; you'll be no more like yourself, the man about town, than the 'Amethyst' to a coal-barge, or choose any other simile you may prefer."

We had now got clear of the harbour, so I ordered the vessel to be hove-to, that, consulting the winds and tides, we might determine the best course to take.

"Where shall we go, then?" asked Harcourt. "The flood has just done. See, that American ship has begun to swing, so we have the whole ebb to get to the westward."

"We'll take a short trip to spread our wings and try their strength," I answered. "What say you to a run through the Needles down to Weymouth? We shall be back in time for dinner to-morrow."

We all three had an engagement for the next day to dine with Harcourt's friends the Granvilles, one of the few families of his acquaintance who had yet come down.

"As you like it; but hang these dinner engagements in the yachting season," exclaimed O'Malley; "I hope you put in a proviso that, should the winds drive us, we were at liberty to run over to Cherbourg, or down to Plymouth, or do as we pleased."

"No," he answered; "the fact is, I scarcely thought the vessel would be ready so soon, and we are bound to do our best to return."

"And I see no great hardship in being obliged to eat a good dinner in the company of such nice girls as the Miss Granvilles seem to be," I put in.

"Well, then, that's settled," Harcourt exclaimed. "We've no time to lose, however, though we have a soldier's wind.—Up with the helm—let draw the foresail—keep her away, Griffiths." And the sails of the little craft filling, she glided gracefully through the water, shooting past Egypt Point, notwithstanding the light air, at the rate of some six knots an hour. Gradually as the sun rose the breeze freshened. Gracefully she heeled over to it. The water bubbled and hissed round her bows, and faster and faster she walked along."

"She's got it in her, sir, depend on't," said Griffiths, as he eyed the gaff-topsail with a knowing look. "There won't be many who can catch her, I'll answer. I was speaking yesterday to my brother-in-law, whose cousin was her master last summer, from the time she was launched, and he gave her a first-rate character—such a sea-boat, sir, as weatherly and dry as a duck. They were one whole day hove-to in the Chops of the Channel without shipping a drop of water, while a big ship, beating up past them, had her decks washed fore and aft."

Griffiths' satisfactory praise of the craft was cut short by the announcement of breakfast, and, with keen

appetites, we descended to discuss as luxurious a meal as three bachelors ever sat down to. Tea, coffee, chocolate, hot rolls, eggs, pickled salmon, lamb-chops, kaplines, and orange-marmalade, were some of the ingredients. Then came some capital cigars, on which Harcourt and O'Malley had chosen a committee of connoisseurs at the Garrick to sit before they selected them.

"'We bachelors lead a merry life, and few that are married lead better,'" sang O'Malley, as he lighted the first Havannah.

"On my word you're right," chimed in Harcourt. "Now I should like any one to point me out three more happy fellows than we are and ought to be. What folly it would be for either of us to think of turning Benedict!"

"Faith, an officer in a marching regiment, with only his pay to live on, had better not bring his thoughts into practice, at all events," observed O'Malley. "Such has been the conclusion to which I have always arrived after having fallen in love with half the lovely girls I have met in my life; and, as ill luck would have it, somehow or other if they have been heiresses, I could not help thinking that it might be their money which attracted me more than their pretty selves, and I have invariably run off without proposing. I once actually went down to marry a girl with a large

fortune, whose friends said she was dying for me, but unfortunately she had a pretty little cousin staying with her, a perfect Hebe in form and face, and, on my life, I could not help making love to her instead of the right lady, who, of course, discarded me, as I deserved, on the spot."

As we opened Scratchell's Bay to the south of the Needles, O'Malley, who had never been there before, was delighted with the view.

"The pointed chalk rocks of the Needles running like a broken wall into the sea, the lofty white cliff presenting a daring front to the storms of the west, the protector, as it were of the soft and fertile lands within; the smooth downs above, with their watchful lighthouse, the party-coloured cliffs of Alum Bay, and Hurst Castle and its attendant towers, invading the waters at the end of the yellow sand-bank.—Come, that description will do for the next tourist who wanders this way," he exclaimed. "Ah, now we are really at sea," he continued; "don't you discover the difference of the land wind and the cool, salt, exhilarating breeze which has just filled our sails, both by feel, taste, smell? At last I begin to get rid of the fogs of London which have hitherto been hanging about me."

As the sun rose the wind freshened, and we had a beautiful run to Weymouth. We brought up in the

bay near a fine cutter, which we remarked particularly, as there were very few other yachts there at the time. Manning the gig, we pulled on shore to pass away the time till dinner, and as none of us had ever been there before, we took a turn to the end of the esplanade to view that once favourite residence of royalty.

As we were walking back we met a man in yachting costume, who, looking hard at O'Malley, came up and shook him warmly by the hand. I also knew his face, but could not recollect where I had seen him, and so it appeared had Harcourt. Slipping his arm through that of O'Malley, who introduced him as Mr. Miles Sandgate, he turned back with us. He seemed a jovial, hail-fellow-well-met sort of character, not refined, but very amusing; so, without further thought, as we were about to embark, Harcourt asked him on board to dine with us. He at once accepted the invitation, and as we passed the yacht we had admired, we found that she belonged to him. I remarked that she had no yacht burgee flying, and he did not speak of belonging to any club. He might, to be sure, have lately bought her, and not had time to be elected. But then, again, he had evidently been constantly at sea, and was, as far as I had an opportunity of judging, a very good seaman.

The dinner passed off very pleasantly: Harcourt's

cook proved himself a first-rate nautical *chef*. Our new acquaintance made himself highly amusing by his anecdotes of various people, and his adventures by sea and land in every part of the globe. There was, however, a recklessness in his manner, and at times a certain assumption and bravado, which I did not altogether like. After we had despatched our coffee, and a number of cigars, he took his leave, inviting us on board the 'Rover,' the name of his yacht; but we declined, on the plea of wishing to get under weigh again that evening, in fact we had agreed to return at once to Cowes to be in time for our dinner at the Granvilles.

"Oh, then you must breakfast with me to-morrow morning, for I am bound for the same place, and shall keep you company," he observed with a laugh; "though I have no doubt that the 'Amethyst' is a fast craft, yet I am so much larger that you must not be offended at my considering it probable that I shall be able to keep up with you."

On this Harcourt could not, in compliment to O'Malley, help asking him to remain longer with us, and he sending a message on board his vessel, both yachts got under weigh together. Perhaps he perceived a certain want of cordiality in Harcourt's manner towards him, as he was evidently a keen

observer of other men; for at all events he did his utmost to ingratiate himself with him, and during the second half of his stay on board he had entirely got rid of the manner which annoyed him, appearing completely a man of the world, well read, and conversant with good society. At the same time he did not hint to what profession he had belonged, nor what had taken him to the different places of which he spoke. In fact, we could not help feeling that there was a certain mystery about him which he did not choose to disclose. At a late hour he hailed his own vessel, and his boat took him on board her. The wind was so light that till the tide turned to the eastward we made but little progress, but the moon was up, and the air soft and balmy, and most unwillingly we turned in before we got through the Needles.

As soon as our visitor had left us, O'Malley told us that he had met him many years before in India, at the house of a relation, he believed, of Sandgate's; that this relation had nursed him most kindly through a severe illness with which he had been attacked, and that he had, on his recovery, travelled with Sandgate through the country. He met him once or twice after that, and he then disappeared from India, nor had he seen him again till he encountered him in London soon after his return. He believed that he had been con-

nected with the opium trade, and suspected that he had actually commanded an opium clipper in his more youthful days, though he fancied he had engaged in the pursuit for the sake of the excitement and danger it afforded, as he appeared superior to the general run of men employed in it.

The next morning, the tide having made against us, we brought up off Yarmouth, when we went on board the 'Rover' to breakfast, and a very sumptuous entertainment Mr. Sandgate gave us, with some cigars, which beat anything I had ever tasted. The cabin we went into was handsomely fitted up; but he did not go through the usual ceremony of showing us over the vessel. It was late in the afternoon when the two vessels anchored in Cowes harbour.

Soon after we brought up we saw the 'Dido' come into the harbour, and just as we were going on shore, Mr. Ribbons himself, in full nautical costume, pulled alongside. He insisted on coming on board, and taxed Harcourt's hospitality considerably before we could get rid of him. Hearing me mention the Granvilles, he very coolly asked us to introduce him. "Why, you see," he added, "there's an acquaintance of mine I find staying with them whom I should like to meet."

We all of course positively declined the honour he intended us.

"Probably if you send a note to your friend he may do as you wish," I observed. "I am not on sufficiently intimate terms with the family."

"Oh! why, you see it's a lady—a young lady, you know—and I can't exactly ask her."

"I regret, but it is impossible, my dear sir," I answered. "You must excuse us or we shall be late for dinner," and leaving him biting his thumbs with doubt and vexation, we pulled on shore.

The party at the Granvilles' was excessively pleasant. The Miss Granvilles, were pretty, nice girls, and they had a friend staying with them, who struck me as being one of the most lovely creatures I had ever seen. She had dark hair and eyes, with an alabaster complexion, a figure slight and elegant, and features purely classical; the expression of her countenance was intelligent and sweet in the extreme, but a shade of melancholy occasionally passed over it, which she in vain endeavoured to conceal. Harcourt at once became deeply interested in her, though he could learn little more about her than that her name was Emily Manners, and that she was staying with some friends at Ryde, the Bosleys, he understood. Who they were he could not tell, for he had never heard their names before. She sang very delightfully; and some more people coming in, we even accomplished

a polka. During the evening, while he was speaking to her, he overheard O'Malley, in his usually amusing way, describing our rencontre with Mr. Warwick Ribbons, and he was surprised, when she heard his name, to see her start and look evidently annoyed, though she afterwards could not help smiling as he continued drawing his picture.

"And, do you know, Miss Granville," he added, "he wanted us to bring him here, declaring that some mutual and very dear friend of his and yours was staying with you."

"Absurd! Who can the man be?" said Miss Granville. "Miss Manners is the only friend staying with us, and I am sure she cannot know such a person, if your description of him is correct. Do you, Emily, dear?"

To my astonishment, Miss Manners blushed, and answered, "I am acquainted with a Mr. Ribbons, that is to say, he is a friend of Mr. Bosley's, but I must disclaim any intimacy with him, and I trust that he did not assume otherwise."

O'Malley saw that he had made a mistake, and with good tact took pains to show that he fully believed little Ribbons had imposed on us, before he quietly dropped the subject, and branched off into some other amusing story.

The Granvilles and their fair friend promised to take a cruise in the 'Amethyst' on the following day, but as the weather proved not very favourable, Harcourt put off their visit till the day after. He thus also gained an excuse for passing a greater part of it in their society.

As we walked down to the esplanade in front of the club-house to look at the yacht, which they had expressed a wish to see, we encountered no less a person than Warwick Ribbons himself. He passed us several times without venturing to speak; but at last mustering courage, he walked up to Miss Manners and addressed her—

"Good morning, Miss Emily. Happy to see you here. Couldn't tell where you'd run to, till old Bosley told me. Been looking for you in every place along the coast. Venture back to Ryde in the 'Dido'? Come, now, you never yet have been on board, and I got her on purpose—" He was, I verily believe, going to say "for you," but he lost confidence, and finished with a smirking giggle, "to take young ladies out, you know."

Harcourt felt inclined to throw the little abomination into the water.

"Thank you," said Miss Manners; "I prefer returning by the steamer."

"Oh, dear, now that is—but I'm going to see your guardian, miss, and may I take a letter to him just to say you're well?" asked Mr. Ribbons; "he'll not be pleased if I don't."

"I prefer writing by the post," answered Emily, now really becoming annoyed at his pertinacity.

"You won't come and take a sail with me, then?" he continued, "you and your friends, I mean."

She shook her head, and bowed.

"Well, then, if you won't, I'm off," he exclaimed, with a look of reproach, and, striking his forehead, he turned round and tumbled into his boat.

We watched him on board his vessel, and the first thing he did was to set to and beat his boy; he then dived down below and returned with a swimming belt, or rather jacket, on, which he immediately began to fill with air, till he looked like a balloon or a Chinese tumbler. The 'Dido' then got under weigh; but her crew were apparently drunk, for she first very nearly ran right on to the quay, and then foul of a boat which was conveying a band of musicians across the river.

A most amusing scene ensued, Ribbons abused the musicians, who had nothing at all to do with it, and they retorted on him, trying to fend off the vessel with their trombones, trumpets, and cornopeans. At one time they seemed inclined to jump on board and take

forcible possession of the 'Dido,' but they thought better of it, and when they got clear they put forth such a discordant blast of derision, finishing like a peal of laughter, that all the spectators on shore could not help joining them, and I wonder the little man ever had courage again to set his foot in Cowes.

We were still on the quay when Sandgate came on shore and passed us; as he did so, he nodded to us, and I observed him looking very hard at Miss Manners. He soon after, without much ceremony, joined us, and managed quietly to enter into conversation with all the ladies. After some time, however, I perceived that he devoted his attention almost exclusively to Emily. He was just the sort of fellow to attract many women, and I suspect that Harcourt felt a twinge of jealousy attacking him, and regretted that O'Malley had ever introduced him; at the same time I trusted that Emily would perceive that want of innate refinement which I had discovered at once; but then, I thought, women have not the same means of judging of men which men have of each other. He did not, however, speak of his vessel, nor offer to take out any of the party.

I shall pass over the next two or three days which we spent in the neighbourhood, each day taking the Granvilles and their friends on the water; and so agreeable did we find that way of passing our time

that none of us felt any inclination to go further. It was, if I remember rightly, on the 24th of July that we went to Spithead to see those four magnificent ships the 'Queen,' 'Vengeance,' 'St. Vincent,' and 'Howe' riding at anchor there. Though the morning was calm, a light breeze sprung up just as we got under weigh, and we arrived in time to see her Majesty and Prince Albert come out of Portsmouth harbour in their yacht steamer, and cruise round the ships. We hove-to just to the southward of the 'Howe,' so as to have a good view of all the ships in line, and it was a beautiful and enlivening sight as they all manned yards and saluted one after the other. From every ship, also, gay flags floated, in long lines from each mast-head to the bowsprit and boom ends, the bands played joyous tunes, and then arose those heart-stirring cheers such as British seamen alone can give. The ladies were delighted—indeed, who could not be so at the proud spectacle?

On our way back to Cowes we were to land Miss Manners, who, most unwillingly on her part, I believe, was obliged to return to her guardian. We accordingly hove-to off the pier, and all the party landed to conduct her to Mr. Bosley's house. After taking a turn on the end of the pier, as we were beginning our journey along its almost interminable length, we on a

sudden found ourselves confronted by two most incongruous personages walking arm-in-arm—Warwick Ribbons and Miles Sandgate. The latter, the instant he saw us, withdrew his arm from that of his companion, and in his usual unembarrassed manner, advanced towards us, putting out his hand to O'Malley and me, and bowing to the ladies. He, as usual, placed himself at the side of Emily, who had Harcourt's arm, and certainly did his best to draw off her attention from him. Little Ribbons tried, also, to come up and speak to her, but either his courage or his impudence could not overcome the cold low bow she gave him. By-the-by, she had bestowed one of a similar nature on Sandgate. After some time, however, he ranged up outside of Harcourt, for he had no shadow of excuse to speak to either Mrs. Granville or her daughters.

"Ah, Miss Emily," he exclaimed, in a smirking way, "you said you would prefer returning here in a steamer to a yacht, and now you've come in one after all."

Emily did not know what to answer to his impudence, so Harcourt relieved her by answering,—

"Miss Manners selected a larger vessel, and had, also, the society of her friends."

"In that case, I might have claimed the honour for my vessel, which is larger than either," observed

Mr. Sandgate, with a tone in which I detected a sneer lurking under a pretended laugh.

"Ah, but then I'm an old friend," interposed the little man; "ain't I, Miss Emily?—known you ever since you was a little girl, though you do now and then pretend not to remember it."

"Hang the fellow's impudence!" Harcourt was on the point of exclaiming, and perhaps might have said something of the sort, when his attention was called off by another actor in the drama. He was a corpulent, consequential-looking gentleman, with a vulgar expression of countenance, dressed in a broad-brimmed straw hat and shooting-coat, with trousers of a huge plaid pattern, and he had an umbrella under his arm though there was not a cloud in the sky. He was, in fact, just the person I might have supposed as the friend of little Ribbons, who, as soon as he espied him, with great glee, ran on to meet him. Poor Emily, at the same time, pronounced the words, "My guardian, Mr. Bosley," in a tone which showed little pleasure at the *rencontre*, and instantly withdrew her arm from Harcourt's. She was, evidently, anxious to prevent a meeting between the parties, for she turned round to the Miss Granvilles and begged them not to come any further, and then, holding out her hand to Harcourt, thanked him for the pleasant

excursions he had afforded her. She was too late, however, for Mr. Bosley advancing, bowed awkwardly to the Miss Granvilles, and then addressing Emily, said:—

"Ay, little missie, a long holiday you've been taking with your friends; but I shan't let you play truant again, I can tell you. I've heard all about your doings from my friend Warwick here—so come along, come along," and seizing her arm, without more ceremony, he walked her off, while Mr. Ribbons smirked and chuckled at the thoughts of having her now in his power, as he fancied. Miles Sandgate, at the same time, bowing to the ladies, and nodding to us in a familiar way which verged upon cool impudence, followed their steps. We all felt excessively annoyed at the scene; but far more regretted that so charming a girl should be in the power of such a coarse barbarian as Mr. Bosley appeared.

On our passage back to Cowes, Miss Granville told me all she knew of Miss Manners. She was the daughter of a Colonel Manners, who had gone out, on some mining speculation or other, to one of the South American states, but it was believed that the ship which was conveying him to England had foundered, with all hands, at sea.

He had left his daughter Emily under the charge

of a Mr. Eastway, a merchant of high standing, and a very gentlemanly man. Mr. Eastway, who was the only person cognisant of Colonel Manners' plans, died suddenly, and Mr. Bosley, his partner, took charge of her and the little property invested in his house for her support. She had been at the same school with the Miss Granvilles, who there formed a friendship for her which had rather increased than abated after they grew up. This was the amount of the information I could extract from them. She never complained of her guardian to them; but she was as well able as they were to observe his excessive vulgarity, though there was probably under it a kindliness of feeling which in some degree compensated for it. Harcourt certainly did his best to conceal the feelings with which he could not help acknowledging to himself she had inspired him, and was much pleased at hearing the Granvilles say that they intended writing to her to propose joining her at Ryde on the day of the regatta.

CHAPTER XI.

A LADY SPIRITED AWAY.—THE CHASE.—THE CONSEQUENCES.

In the meantime Harcourt made daily trips to Ryde, and promenaded the pier from one end to the other, and through every street of the town, in the hope of meeting Miss Manners, but in vain. He met Ribbons frequently, but of course he could not inquire after her from him, and consequently avoided him. Sandgate, he encountered several times; but he had conceived such an antipathy to the man, as well as a suspicion of his character, that, as O'Malley was not with us, he did not think it necessary to recognize him. Harcourt felt all the time that he was not treating O'Malley and me fairly in keeping about the island, and therefore promised to start on a long cruise directly after the regatta. The first day of the regatta was cold, and blowing fresh, so none of the ladies went. It was the schooner-match round the island, when the little 'Bianca' carried off the cup from her huge com-

petitors, though she came in last, so much time being allowed for the difference of tonnage. The next day of the regatta the weather was most propitious, and we had the pleasure of meeting Miss Manners on the end of the pier with Mr. Bosley, who saved Harcourt from inviting him, by telling us that "if we would give him a hundred pounds for every minute he was in that gimcrack-looking boat he wouldn't come. Let him have a steady-going steamer, which didn't care for winds and tides." He made no objection to Emily's accompanying us, though little Ribbons coming up just as she was stepping into the boat, reproached her for not visiting the 'Dido' instead.

The sight was beautiful in the extreme; for, independent of the racing-vessels, hundred of other yachts were sailing about in every direction. The course also being round the Nab light, and a similar light-vessel moored at the mouth of the Southampton Water, the racing-yachts were the whole time in sight of Ryde. The Royal Victoria Yacht Club-house was decorated with banners, and from a battery in front of it were fired the necessary signals and salutes, while several yachts anchored off the pier-head were also gaily decked with flags. In the afternoon the Queen came from Osborne on board the 'Fairy,' amid the animated scene, and made

several wide circles, passing close to the pier, and as she glided by, each vessel saluted with their guns or lowered their flags. The whole day the 'Dido' had most perseveringly endeavoured to follow us, and several times we saw her nearly run foul of other vessels: at last as she passed the 'Fairy,' Ribbons, in a fit of enthusiastic loyalty, I suppose, loaded his gun to the muzzle, and discharged it directly at the steamer, the lighted wadding almost falling on board, while the recoil of the gun upset the little man, who was looking with dismay at the effect of his achievement. He was not hurt, however, for he picked himself up, and managed to fire another wadding on board the 'Amethyst.' The last we saw of him that day he was hard and fast on a mud-bank half-way between Ryde and Cowes. Sandgate's vessel was also cruising about, and passed us several times, though at a respectful distance; but I saw that his telescope was directed each time towards Miss Manners. On a sudden it struck me that Griffiths might possibly know something of the man, and I accordingly asked him, in a mere casual way, if he had ever seen him before he came on board us?

"Why, yes, sir, I have seen him more than once," he answered; "maybe he don't recollect me, though we've gone through some wild scenes together."

"How is that?" I asked, with surprise.

"Why, you see, sir, I've done something in the free-trade line myself, I own, and he's lent me a hand at it."

"What! you don't mean to say that Mr. Sandgate is a smuggler?" I asked.

"Yes, I do, sir, though, and many's the rich crop he's run in that ere craft of his."

"Impossible! why she's a yacht," I replied.

"No, sir, she's only a private vessel at the best, and if she was a yacht she's not the only one as—Howsomdever, I won't say any thing again yachts. It's the look-out of the other members of the club that they don't smuggle, and more's the shame of them who does."

"But I thought that smugglers were so bound together that they would never speak against each other," I observed.

"So they are, sir; and though that Mr. Sandgate has no reason to expect any favour from me, for reasons he well knows, I wouldn't speak to anybody else of him as I do but to you, or my master, because I don't think he's fit company for such as you, sir, and that's the truth."

Thinking over what Griffiths had told me, I determined in future to be on my guard against Sandgate. I, however, did not repeat what I had heard to any

one except to Harcourt. In the afternoon we returned to Cowes, leaving Miss Manners with the Granvilles.

Hearty having promised to pay some friends a visit at Torquay, the next morning we got under weigh, and though the winds were light, we got there on the following day. Taking all points into consideration, I think Torquay and its surrounding scenery is the most beautiful part of England. Our stay was short, for Harcourt was anxious to get back to Cowes, as he had found metal more attractive than even Devonshire could afford.

We reached Cowes late in the day, and after dinner went to the Granvilles', for we were now on sufficiently intimate terms to do so. I missed Emily from their circle, and inquired if she was still staying with them.

"I am sorry to say that she left us suddenly yesterday evening," answered Miss Granville. "It was almost dark when a letter arrived from her guardian. It stated that he had gone over to Portsmouth on business connected with her affairs, and that when there he was taken dangerously ill; that something had transpired which he could alone communicate to her, and he entreated her to come to him without a moment's delay. The bearer of the letter was Mr. Miles Sandgate, who, it appeared, had met Mr. Bosley at Portsmouth, and volunteered to carry it,

and to escort Miss Manners back. Emily immediately prepared for her departure, though she hesitated about accepting Mr. Sandgate's offer. We also sent down to the quay to learn if there was any steamer going to Portsmouth that evening, but the last for the day had already left. Mr. Sandgate on this requested Emily would allow his vessel to convey her, observing, in the most courteous way, that he saw the difficulties of the case, and would himself remain at Cowes till his vessel returned, saying, at the same time, that he thought he might be of service in escorting her to the hotel where Mr. Bosley was lying ill. Mamma herself would have gone with her, but she was unwell, and we girls should not much have mended the matter. Mr. Sandgate all the time stood by, acknowledging that he himself was perplexed, and would do anything she wished; till at last I bethought me of sending our housekeeper, who was very ready to do her best to serve Emily, and to this plan, as Mr. Sandgate is a friend of yours as well as of Mr. Bosley's, Emily had no further hesitation in agreeing. We walked with her down to the quay, and saw her safely on board."

"And have you heard to-day from her?" I asked, in a tone of anxiety I could not conceal.

"No," answered Miss Granville; "we thought she would have written."

"Good heavens! and has she trusted herself with that man?" exclaimed Harcourt.

Miss Granville stared.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"That I have very serious suspicions of his character," answered Harcourt. "I wish that she had taken any other means of getting to Portsmouth; not that I for a moment suspect he would not safely convey her there, but I am unwilling that she should—that any lady, a friend of yours, should have even been on board that vessel."

"You surprise me!" exclaimed Miss Granville, now beginning to be really alarmed; and I volunteered to run over to Portsmouth at once, to inquire for Mr. Bosley, but she had not heard the name of the hotel where he was staying.

"That shall not stop me," replied Harcourt. "I will inquire at all of them till I learn."

She smiled at his eagerness, though when he told her all he had heard of Sandgate, she saw that he had reason for his annoyance at what had occurred. We were engaged in paying our adieux, when the house-bell rang, and directly afterwards Mr. Warwick Ribbons was announced. Astonishment was depicted on the countenances of all present, at the appearance of this most unexpected visitor, and all wondered what

could have brought him there again. He had, by-the-by, already called in the morning to beg Miss Manners and her friends would take a sail in the 'Dido,' but hearing that she was no longer there, had gone away. He gazed about the room, his round eyes blinking with the bright light after having come out of darkness, and, with a flourish of his hat, he bowed to the ladies.

"Beg pardon," he said, in a nervous tone; "but I've come to ask where Miss Manners is?"

"She has gone to see her guardian, Mr. Bosley, who has been taken seriously ill at Portsmouth," answered Mrs. Granville.

"No, she ain't, ma'am," he exclaimed, throwing his hat down on the ground with vehemence; "Mr. Bosley isn't ill, and isn't at Portsmouth, and Miss Manners isn't with him, for I'm just come from Ryde, and there I saw him as well as ever he was in his life, and he begged that I would come and ask what has become of her. Your servants this morning told me that she wasn't here, so I made sure that she'd gone back to Ryde, and started off to look after her."

We were now seriously alarmed at what we had heard, as were the rest of the party in a less degree. Nothing more could we elicit from Mr. Ribbons, though Miss Granville convinced him that the account she

gave of Miss Manners' departure was true, and it appeared too certain that she had been carried off for some reason or other by Miles Sandgate. I could have staked my existence that she had been as much deceived by him as were her friends. I need not attempt to describe what were Harcourt's feelings on finding that his worst suspicions were more than realized. She was in Sandgate's power, and his vessel was large enough for him to carry her to any distant part of the world. A bold and accomplished seaman as he was, he would not hesitate, of course, to run across the Atlantic, and with the start of upwards of twenty-four hours which he had, it would be impossible to hope to overtake him, even if we could sail at once; but without a good supply of water and provisions, it would be madness to attempt to follow him. This, however, as soon as by possibility we could, we determined to do. Ribbons wanted to come also, but we recommended him to employ his vessel in a different direction to ours; and while I was busy in collecting provisions and stores, Harcourt made inquiries among all the boatmen and revenue people to learn anything about the 'Rover,' and what course she had steered on leaving Cowes. The wind, it appeared, had been from the eastward, and as the tide was ebbing, she must have gone to the westward, and could not have

got round by the Nab. At first he could learn nothing about her; but after some time he met a man who had watched her getting under weigh, and, after she had stood across as if turning up towards Portsmouth, had seen her, or a vessel exactly like her, keep away and run past Cowes, in the direction he supposed. One of the revenue-men, who had been on duty in the guard-boat, had boarded her, and her people said they were bound for Cherbourg. Harcourt found, also, that her character was suspected, and that a revenue-cutter was on the watch for her. This circumstance, he conjectured, if he could fall in with the cutter, would give him the best chance of learning the course she had steered. I believe that he ought to have called in the aid of the law, but of that he did not think: as soon as he found that he could gain no further information about the 'Rover,' he came to assist us in getting the 'Amethyst' ready for sea. We also shipped six additional hands, and some cutlasses and pistols, for we felt certain that, should we fall in with Sandgate at sea, he would resist an attempt to rescue Emily from his power. By twelve o'clock at night our preparations were completed, and we determined, in the first place, to run across to Cherbourg, on the bare possibility of his having gone there, to complete his own supplies for a long voyage. At the

same time, we despatched little Ribbons in the 'Dido,' to look into every port along the coast, and to wait for us at Penzance. Miss Granville, with much judgment, undertook to send to every place to the eastward, and to let Mr. Bosley know, that he might take the proper measures to search for the daring scoundrel. I need not say that Harcourt was in a perfect fever of excitement, and we were little less calm, particularly O'Malley, whose indignation at Sandgate's conduct knew no bounds, especially as he had acknowledged him as an acquaintance, and introduced him to Harcourt.

Little Ribbons showed that there was something good beneath the mass of absurdity, vanity, and vulgarity which enveloped him, by the eagerness with which he undertook the task we had assigned him; although he must have been pretty well convinced that he had no chance of winning the hand of the young lady, and we verily believed that, should he fall in with Sandgate, he would attack him, even with the fearful odds he would have against him. The weather was clear, and the stars and moon shone bright from the sky, as, with a fine fresh breeze from the eastward, and an ebb tide, we got under weigh and ran through the Needles. We then hauled up, and shaped a course for Cherbourg, for we had no other clue by which to steer than the vague report that the 'Rover' had gone there. We

thought, also, that Sandgate would very probably have selected that place, as being the nearest French port to the English coast, and one into which he might at all times run, and from which he might as easily escape For the sake of his victim he would probably go there, in the hopes that she might agree to the object, whatever it might be, which had induced him to venture on the atrocious exploit of carrying her off. We had understood that she was an almost portionless girl, so that her fortune could not have been the temptation —in fact, we were completely in the dark, and it was a subject too delicate and painful to discuss.

The wind held fair, and at daybreak we were running across the Channel at the rate of eight knots an hour. Just before sunrise, when the horizon is often the clearest, I went aloft to discover if any vessels coming from the direction we were steering for were in sight, to give me any information of the chase, but not a sail was visible anywhere ahead of us, though several were seen off the island. For the next three or four hours not a cutter was seen, though many square-rigged vessels were standing down Channel. Almost worn out with mental and physical exertion, Harcourt threw himself into his berth, while I took charge of the deck, and promised to have him called should there be any vessel in sight either like the chase or from

which we might gain any information about her. He had not been asleep an hour, when we heard a hail, and jumping on deck, just as O'Malley was coming to call him, we found that we were hove-to close to a revenue cutter, and that I had ordered a boat to be lowered ready to go on board her. He jumped in with me, and in another minute we were on the deck of the cutter. Her commander was excessively courteous, and ready to do everything we might propose to overhaul the 'Rover.' From him I found that the information I had gained about Sandgate was correct; and he told us that, according to his orders, he had followed the 'Rover' at a distance, so as not to excite suspicion, and that he had seen her yesterday afternoon enter Cherbourg harbour, where, supposing she would remain for some time, he had again stood off during the night.

"Then to a certainty she is still there!" exclaimed Harcourt, in a tone which somewhat surprised the officer.

The plan he instantly formed was to run in directly it was dusk, while the cutter remained in the offing, and to get alongside the 'Rover' before Sandgate could have time to carry Miss Manners on shore. We thus should not lose much time, for the wind had fallen considerably, and we could scarcely expect to reach the mouth of the harbour before dark. The best-formed

plans are, however, liable to failure, particularly at sea; and as we got well in with the land, just put off Point Querqueville, it fell almost calm. There was still, however, a light air at times, which sent the cutter through the water, so that, by degrees, we drew in with the shore. We must have been for some time visible from the heights before it grew dark. The flood-tide was now sweeping us up to the eastward, and before we could get through the western passage we were carried past the breakwater. The large fires, lighted by the workmen engaged on that stupendous work, dazzled our eyes so much, that we were almost prevented from seeing the entrance, and they totally disabled us from watching the western passage. At last, however, the wind freshened up, and we ran inside the breakwater. The moon had by this time risen, and we could see across that fine sheet of water, which, in extent and the shelter it affords to a fleet, rivals Plymouth Sound. Harcourt's impatience was excessive. We did not anchor; but as there was a light wind, we kept cruising about among the men-of-war and large steamers lying there, in the hopes of finding the 'Rover' brought up among them. In vain, however, did we search; she was nowhere to be seen. At last we determined to go on shore, and endeavour to learn whether the 'Rover' had been there at all. Pulling

up between two fine stone piers, we landed at the end of the inner harbour, and repaired at once to the house of Monsieur M——, who obligingly assisted us in making the inquiries I desired. After some time we met a person who asserted that he had observed the 'Rover' at anchor that very evening.

"Even with this light you can see her from the end of the pier," he observed; "come, I will show you where she is."

We hurried to the spot, but the space where she had been was vacant. That she had not entered the inner harbour, Monsieur M—— was certain, as she could not have come without his knowledge. Baffled, but still determined to continue the pursuit, we returned on board; and I was convinced that we had been seen from the shore before dark, and that Sandgate, suspecting we had come in quest of him, had slipped out by the western entrance, while we were still outside the breakwater.

On making inquiries among other vessels anchored near where the 'Rover' had lain, we found that, as we suspected, a vessel answering her description had got under weigh at the very time we supposed, and had stood off to the westward. After holding another consultation, we came to the conclusion that Sandgate would certainly avoid the open sea, and keep along the

French coast, and we thought it probable would make for Jersey or Guernsey. At all events, thither we determined to run. Again we were under sail, and by the time we got clear of the harbour, the wind had shifted round to the westward of north, and as the ebb had then made, we suspected Sandgate would take advantage of the tide, and run through the Race of Alderney. We calculated, however, that by the time we could reach it, we should have the full force of that rapid current in our favour, whereas he would only have the commencement of it. No one on board turned in, for the weather was too threatening, the passage we were about to attempt too dangerous, and the time too exciting, to allow us to think of sleep.

As we brought the bright light of Cape La Hogue a little before the larboard beam, the wind increased considerably, and we began to feel the short broken sea of the Race. Every moment it increased; rapidly the water rose and fell in white-topped pyramids, leaping high above our bulwarks, and threatening to tumble on board and overwhelm us with its weight. The hatches were battened down and everything well secured on deck; and well it was so, for sea after sea came leaping over the side, now on the quarter, then over the bows, and now again amid-ships. It was impossible to say where it would strike the vessel, for not

the best steering could avoid it; yet on we flew with the fast rising breeze, rolling, and pitching, and tumbling, the water foaming and roaring, and literally drenching us with spray even when we avoided the heavier seas. The moon, too, which shone forth on the wild tumult of waters, rather increased the awfulness of the scene, by exhibiting to us the dangers which surrounded us on every side; yet so clear were the lights both of La Hogue on the left, and the Casketts on the right, that we had no difficulty in steering our course. The dark outline of the small island of Sark at last appeared in sight on the starboard beam, and in order to avoid the wild shoal of the Dirouilles Rocks, towards which the early flood sets, we hauled up more to the westward.

Still urged onward by the terrific force of the tide, we continued plunging through the mad waters, till daybreak showed us the island of Jersey right ahead, and Guernsey on our weather beam. So strong was the current, however, that we had drifted considerably to the east, and in the gray light of the morning, not a cable's length from us, appeared the dark heads of the Dirouilles, while on the starboard hand the sea, in masses of foam, was breaking over the equally terrific rocks of the Paternosters. The wind had now got so far to the westward, and the tide set so strong against

us, that finding we were drifting bodily to leeward, we ran close in shore, and dropped our anchor in a romantic little cove called Bouley Bay, on the north-east coast of Jersey. There was a narrow sandy beach on which a few boats were drawn up, and a narrow ravine leading down to it, while on either side lofty cliffs towered high above our heads. On the side of the ravine was situated a small hotel, the master of which came off to us as soon as he saw us standing into the bay.

To the first question I put to him as to whether he had seen any vessel off the coast that morning, he told us that at break of day he had been to the top of the cliffs and had observed a cutter standing between the Paternosters and the land, and that he thought it probable she would be able to double Cape Grosnez before the tide made against her, in which case she would have little difficulty in getting round to St. Helier's, if she happened to be bound there.

"If she is, we shall catch her to a certainty," exclaimed O'Malley; and he forthwith volunteered to go across the island to try what he could do, and I proposed accompanying him, as I thought I might be of assistance in getting hold of Sandgate. Of course Harcourt gladly assented to our offer, although he determined himself to remain in the vessel.

I have not described Harcourt's feelings all this time,

his hopes and fears—his eager excitement, as he thought the 'Rover' was within his reach—his dread, lest his Emily should have suffered injury or alarm—they were too intense for utterance.

As soon as the 'Amethyst' had made sail, O'Malley and I started away across the little island as fast as our legs could carry us. We should have hired horses or a carriage, but none were to be procured at the quiet little spot where we landed, so we resolved to trust to our own feet, of which we had by no means lost the use, as the way we made them move over the ground gave full evidence. As soon as we reached St. Helier's, we hurried down to the pier, when, to our infinite satisfaction, we beheld the 'Rover' at anchor in the outer roads. We immediately hurried off to the authorities to give information, and to procure assistance to rescue Miss Manners. On our way we suddenly came upon the villain of whom we were in search—Sandgate himself. Something made him turn round and he caught sight of us. Without a moment's hesitation he darted off towards the quay where a boat was in waiting, and jumping into her, pulled towards the cutter. He had every reason to fear, we learned, for on his appearance in the morning he had been narrowly watched by the revenue-officers, who suspected that some smuggling business had attracted him to the island. Such in fact

was the case, as he had gone there to settle with his agents, and to procure certain stores before he commenced the long voyage he contemplated, little thinking that we should so soon have been able to track him thither. Before we were able to engage a boat he had got on board, and the 'Rover' was under weigh for the westward. I have an idea that some of the boatmen were in league with him. At all events, they seemed to think that it was their business to impede us as much as possible, and to do their best to help the hunted fox to escape. Such a feeling is very general among that class. The more eagerness and impatience we exhibited, the more difficulties they threw in our way; and it was not till the 'Rover' was well clear of the harbour, and pursuit hopeless, that we could obtain a boat. We got one at last, and jumping into it, asked the men to pull away out of the harbour. Much to their vexation and to our satisfaction, we in a short time caught sight of our friend's cutter. She had just got off Elizabeth Castle, which stands on a rocky point isolated at high water from the main land. She hove-to, and in a few minutes we jumped on board and gave Harcourt the information we had obtained on shore, and pointed out in the distance a sail which we had little doubt was the 'Rover.'

Harcourt then told us that after we had started

overland, he had remained two hours at anchor, and then shipping an old pilot, in a Welsh wig, who only spoke Jersey French—the oddest *patois* he ever heard —he got under weigh for St. Helier's. The 'Amethyst' beat along that rocky and lofty coast, inside the Paternosters, till she rounded Cape Grosnez—which as she had had a fresh breeze, she had done without much difficulty. She was then kept away, passing the rugged and threatening rocks of the Corbière, rounding which with a flowing sheet, she was headed in among an archipelago of hidden dangers towards the town of St. Helier's. As they were passing the Corbière, Harcourt observed a cutter standing away to the westward, as if she had come out of St. Aubin's Bay. He pointed her out to Griffiths, but she was too far off to distinguish what she was, and he was unwilling to make chase till we had ascertained whether Sandgate had been there. He accordingly stood on, eager to receive our report.

Our first act was to tumble the pilot into the shore-boat, and make chase after the cutter Harcourt had before observed. She had a very long start, but we trusted to the chances the winds and tides might afford us to come up with her—yet we could not but see that she had many more in her favour to aid her escape. There were, however, still some hours of daylight, and

as long as we could keep her in sight, we need not despair. From the course she was steering, as much to the westward as she could lay up with the wind as it then stood, we felt certain that our worst suspicions would be realized, and that Sandgate fully intended to run across to America, or to some other distant land.

Never had the 'Amethyst' before carried such a press of sail as she now staggered under; but little would it have availed us had the wind, which came in uncertain currents, not shifted round to the northward, while the 'Rover' still had the breeze as before. It continued, however, increasing till we could no longer bear our gaff-topsail, and so much had we overhauled the chase, that, at sun-down, we were within two miles of her. Now came the most critical time; as before the moon rose it would scarcely be possible to keep her in sight, and Sandgate would not fail to profit by the darkness if he could, to effect his escape—he, also, having the wind exactly as we had it, now sailed as fast as we did. So exciting had become the chase, even to those least interested in it, that every man kept the deck, and with so many well-practised eyes, Argus like, fixed on her, any movement she made would scarcely escape us. The sky was clear, and the stars shone bright, but the wind whistled shrilly, and the foam flew over us, as the little craft, heeling over to

her gunwale, plunged and tore through the foaming and tumbling waves. Thus passed hour after hour. If the 'Rover' hauled up, so did we; if she kept away, the movement was instantly seen and followed by us, though all the time, as O'Malley observed, he could not, for the life of him, make out anything but a dark shadow with a scarcely defined form stalking like an uneasy ghost before us: as to know what she was about, it passed his comprehension how we discovered it. That she was, however, increasing her distance we became, at length, aware, by the difficulty we experienced in seeing her, and at last the shadowy form faded into air.

Every one on board uttered an exclamation of disappointment, and some swore deeply, if not loudly.

"Can no one make her out?" Harcourt asked.

The seamen peered through the darkness.

"There she is on the weather-bow," sung out one.

"I think I see her right ahead still," said another.

"No; I'm blowed if that ain't her on the lee-bow there," was the exclamation of a third.

One thing only was certain, she was not to be seen. We determined, however, to keep the same course we had been before steering, and as the moon would rise shortly, we trusted again to sight her. The intervening hour was one of great anxiety; and when, at last, the

crescent moon, rising from her watery bed, shed her light upon the ocean, we looked eagerly for the chase. Right ahead there appeared a sail, but what she was it was impossible to say; she might be the 'Rover,' or she might be a perfect stranger. On still we steered due west, for, although we felt that our chance of overtaking Sandgate was slight indeed, yet our only hope remained in keeping a steady course. Thus we continued all night; and the moment the first streaks of light appeared in the sky, Harcourt was at the masthead eagerly looking out for the chase. Far as the eye could reach, not a sail was to be seen: there was no sign of land, nothing was visible but the gray sky and the lead-coloured water. Still Harcourt remained at his post, for he dared not acknowledge to himself that Emily was lost to him for ever. In vain he strained his eyes, till the sun rose and cast his beams along the ocean. A white object glistened for a moment ahead; it might have been the wing of a sea-fowl, but as he watched, there it remained, and he felt certain that it was the head of a cutter's mainsail. Taking the bearings of the sail, he descended on deck, and, as a last hope, steered towards it, sending a hand on the cross-trees to watch her movements. The wind fortunately, as it proved to us, was variable, and thus we again neared the chase. As we rose her hull,

Griffiths pronounced her to be of the size of the 'Rover,' if not the 'Rover' herself.

"Well, we'll do our best to overhaul her," I exclaimed; "set the gaff-topsail. The craft must bear it."

And, pressed to her utmost, the little 'Amethyst' tore through the foaming waves. Thus we went on the whole day, till towards the evening the chase again ran us completely out of sight. The wind, also, was falling away, and, at sun-down, there was almost a complete calm. Still the vessel had steerage-way, so we kept the same course as before. At length I threw myself on a sofa in the cabin. I know not how long I had slept, when I was awoke by feeling the yacht once more springing livelily through the water. I jumped on deck without awaking O'Malley, who was on the opposite sofa. The morning was just breaking, and, by the faint light of the early dawn, I perceived a large dark object floating at some distance ahead of us.

"What is that?" I exclaimed to Griffiths, who had charge of the deck.

"A dismasted ship, sir," was the answer; "I have seen her for some time, and as she lay almost in our course, I steered for her, as I thought as how you'd like to overhaul her, sir."

"You did well," I answered; "rouse all hands, and see a boat clear for boarding her. But what is

that away there just beyond the wreck? By heavens, it's the 'Rover,' and becalmed too. Grant the wind may not reach her!"

Awoke by hearing the people called, Harcourt and O'Malley were by my side. I pointed out the wreck and the cutter to them.

"Well," exclaimed O'Malley, "the big ship there may still float, but the breeze which has been sending us along, may, at last, reach the sails of the 'Rover,' so I propose we make sure of her first."

To our joy, however, we found that the wind, instead of reaching her, was gradually falling away, and by the time we were up with the wreck, the sea was as calm as a sheet of glass. We were in hopes, also, that keeping, as we had done, the wreck between us and the 'Rover,' we might have escaped observation, and in the gray light of morning we might come upon her unawares. There were several people on board the ship who cheered as they saw assistance at hand, and reason they had to be glad, for, from the clear streams of water which gushed from her sides, they had evidently great labour to keep her afloat. No time was to be lost, the gig was soon in the water, and Harcourt, O'Malley, and I, with eight men fully armed, pulled towards the 'Rover,' while old Griffiths, the master, boarded the ship in the other boat. My friend's

heart beat quick as we neared the cutter. She was the 'Rover,' there was no doubt, but whether Sandgate would attempt to defend his vessel was the question. A moment more would solve it. We dashed alongside: the men, stowed away in the bottom of the boat, sprang up, and before the crew of the 'Rover' had time to defend themselves, we were on board. Except the man at the helm and the look-out forward, the watch on deck were all asleep, and those two, as it afterwards appeared, were glad to see us approach. The noise awoke Sandgate, who, springing on deck, found himself confronted by O'Malley and me, while half his crew were in the power of my people, and the forehatch was battened over the rest. A pistol he had seized in his hurry was in his hand: he pointed it at my breast, but it missed fire; on finding which, he dashed it down on the deck, and before we could seize him, retreated forward, where some of his crew rallied round him. With fear and hope ultimately racking his bosom, Harcourt hurried below. He pronounced his own name; the old nurse opened the door of the main cabin—a fair girl was on her knees at prayer—she sprang up, and seeing him, forgetful of all else, fell weeping in his arms. I shall pass over all she told him, except that Sandgate had behaved most respectfully to her, informing her, however, that he should

take her to the United States, where she must consent to marry him, and that, on their return to England, he would put her in possession of a large fortune, to which by some means he had discovered she was heiress, and which had induced him to run off with her. It was, I afterwards learned, his last stake, as the reduction of duties no longer enabled him to make a profit by smuggling; and as he had no other means of supporting his extravagant habits, he was a ruined man. In fact, to the dishonest trader and smuggler alone will free-trade prove an injury. What was our surprise, as Harcourt handed her on to the deck of the yacht, to see her rush forward into the arms of an old gentleman who stood by the companion-hatch.

"My own Emily!" he exclaimed, as he held her to his heart.

It was Colonel Manners.

"My father!" burst from her lips.

A young lady was reclining on the hatch near him; she rose as she saw Emily, and they threw themselves on each other's neck.

"My sister!" they both exclaimed, and tears of joy started to their eyes.

There were several other strangers on board, who, by Griffiths' exertions, had been removed from the wreck. Our boats were busily employed in removing

the others, for there was no time to lose, as the ship was settling fast in the water. All the people being placed in safety, we proceeded to remove the articles of greatest value and smallest bulk on board the two vessels, which became then very much loaded, when a breeze springing up, another sail hove in sight: she bore down towards us, and, in a short time, the little fat figure of Mr. Warwick Ribbons graced the deck of the 'Amethyst.' His delight at seeing Emily in safety was excessive, but, though he looked sentimental, he said nothing; and, when he heard that the colonel was alive, and that there was another sister in the case, his face elongated considerably. From motives of charity, I hurried him, with several of the passengers, and part of the cargo on board the 'Dido,' and the three vessels made sail together for Falmouth. Just as we were leaving the ship, a deep groan issued from her hold, and her head inclining towards the water, she slowly glided down into the depths of the ocean. Landing all our passengers at Falmouth, except the colonel and his daughters, we had a quick run to Cowes. Colonel Manners established his claim to his property. O'Malley had made such good use of his time during the voyage, that he won the heart and hand of Julia Manners; while, as may be suspected, Emily owned, that if Harcourt loved her, their affection was recipro-

cal; and the same day saw them joined respectively together in holy matrimony.

Such was the result of my friend Harcourt's summer cruise; and I think you will all agree that the narrative is not altogether unworthy of the name of a romance. The last time I saw little Ribbons he was on board the 'Dido,' which lay high and dry on the mud off Ryde, and I afterwards heard that he married a Miss Bosley, who, I conclude, was a daughter of old Bosley's.

Sandgate's people seemed resolved to stand by him, but not to proceed to extremities, or to offer any opposition to our carrying off Miss Manners and her attendant. He evidently was doing all he could to induce them to support him; and I believe, had he possessed the power, he would, without the slightest compunction, have hove us all overboard, and carried off his prize in spite of us. As it was, he could do nothing but gnash his teeth and scowl at us with unutterable hatred. Handing the young lady, and the old nurse into the boat, we pulled away from the 'Rover.' Of course, we should have wished to have secured Sandgate; but as we had come away without any legal authority to attempt so doing, we saw that it would be wiser to allow him to escape. We should probably have overpowered him and his lawless crew, but then the females might have been hurt in the

scuffle, and we were too glad to recover them uninjured to think at the moment of the calls of justice.

"And what became of the rascal Sandgate?" exclaimed Hearty; "by Neptune! I should like to come up with the fellow, and to lay my craft alongside his till I had blown her out of the water. Fancy a scoundrel in the nineteenth century venturing to run off with a young lady!" We laughed at his vehemence. Hearty always spoke under a generous impulse.

"Oh, it's not the first case of the sort I have heard of," said Carstairs; "more than one has occurred within the last few years in Ireland: but I agree with Hearty, that I should like to catch Mr. Sandgate, for the sake of giving him a good thrashing. Though I hadn't the pleasure of knowing Miss Manners, every man of honour should take a satisfaction in punishing such a scoundrel." Bubble and Porpoise responded heartily to the sentiment, and so strong a hold did the account take of the minds of all the party, that we talked ourselves into the idea that it would be our lot to fall in with Sandgate, and to inflict the punishment he had before escaped. Will Bubble had taken an active part in fitting out the yacht, and in selecting most of the crew: he consequently was on rather more intimate terms with them than the rest of us; not that it was the intimacy which breeds contempt,

but he took a kindly interest in their welfare, and used to talk to them about their families, and the past incidents of their lives. Indeed under a superficial coating of frivolity and egotism, I discovered that Bubble possessed a warm and generous heart—fully alive to the calls of humanity. I do not mean to say that the coating was not objectionable: he would have been by far a superior character without it. Indeed, perhaps all I ought to say is, that he was capable of better things than those in which he too generally employed his time. He returned aft one day from a visit foreward, and told us he had discovered that several of the men were first-rate yarn-spinners. "The master," said he, "seems a capital hand; but old Sleet beats all the others hollow. If it would not be subversive of all discipline, I wish you could come foreward and hear them in the forecastle as one caps the other's tale with something more wonderful still."

"I don't think that would quite do," said Hearty: "if we could catch them on deck spinning their yarns, it would be very well. But, at all events, I will invite Snow into the cabin and consult him."

According to Hearty's proposal, he invited Snow down. "Mr. Snow," said Hearty, "we hear that some of the people forward are not bad hands at spinning yarns, and if you could manage it, we should be glad to

hear them, but it would never do to send for them aft for the purpose."

"You are right, sir, they would become tongue-tied to a certainty," answered Snow: "just let me alone, and I will manage to catch some of them in the humour. Several of them have been engaged, one time or another, in the free-trade, and have some curious things to tell about it."—"But I thought smuggling had been knocked on the head long ago," observed Hearty.

"Oh, no sir, of late years a very considerable blow has been struck against it; but even now some people find inducements to follow it," answered the master. "I found it out to be a bad trade many years ago, and very few of those I know who still carry it on do more than live, and live very badly too; some of them spending many a month out of the year in prison, and that is not where an honest man would wish to be." However, I have undertaken to chronicle the adventures of the 'Frolic,' and of those who dwelt on board her, so that I must not devote too much of our time to the yarns, funs, witticisms, and anecdotes and good sayings with which we banished anything like tedium during our voyage. No blue devils could stand for an instant such powerful exorcisms.

It was not, however, till some time after this that we benefited by Snow's inquiries among the crew.

CHAPTER XII.

THE 'FROLIC' IN A GALE, IN WHICH THE FROLICKERS SEE NO FUN.—A SAIL IN SIGHT.—HER FATE.—AN UNEXPECTED INCREASE TO THE CREW.—BUBBLE SHOWS THAT HE CAN THINK AND FEEL.—INTELLIGENCE OBTAINED.

"WHAT sort of weather are we going to have, Snow?" asked Hearty, as we came on deck after dinner one afternoon, when the cutter was somewhere about the middle of the Bay of Biscay.

"Dirty, sir, dirty!" was the unenlivening answer, as the old master looked with one eye to windward, which just then was the south-west. In that direction thick clouds were gathering rapidly together, and hurrying headlong towards us, like, as Carstairs observed, "A band of fierce barbarians, rushing like a torrent down upon the plain." The sea grew darker and darker in hue, and then flakes of foam, white as the driven snow, blew off from the hitherto smooth surface of the ocean. The sea rose higher and higher, and the cutter, close hauled, began to pitch into them with an uneasy motion, subversive of the entire internal economy of landsmen.

"The sooner we get the canvas off her the better, now, sir," said Snow to Porpoise, who had come on deck after calculating our exact position on the charts.

"As soon as you like," was the answer. "We shall have to heave her to, I suspect; but that little matters as we have plenty of sea-room out here, and she may dance away for a fortnight with the helm a-lee, and come to no harm."

The topmast was struck; the jib was taken in, and a storm-jib set; the foresail was handed, and the mainsail meantime was closely reefed. Relieved for a time, she breasted the seas more easily; but the wind had not yet reached its strength. Before nightfall down came the gale upon us with all its fury; the cutter heeled over to it as she dashed wildly through the waves.

"The sooner we get the mainsail altogether off her the better, sir," said Snow. This was accordingly done, and the try-sail was set instead, and the helm lashed a-lee.

"There; we are as snug and comfortable as possible," exclaimed Porpoise, as the operation was completed. "Now all hands may turn in and go to sleep till the gale is over."

The landsmen looked rather blue.

"Very funny notion this of comfort!" exclaimed Carstairs, who had the worst sea-going inside of any of the party. "Oh! oh! oh! is it far from the shore?"

"Couldn't get there, sir, if any one was to offer ten thousand guineas," said Snow. "We are better as we are, sir, out here—by very far."

The cutter which in Cowes harbour people spoke of as a fine large craft, now looked and felt very like a mere cockle-shell, as she pitched and tumbled about amid the mighty waves of the Atlantic.

"Don't you feel very small, Carstairs?" exclaimed Hearty, as he sat convulsively grasping the sides of the sofa in the cabin.

"Yes, faith, I do," answered the Gentle Giant, who lay stretched out opposite to him. "Never felt so very little since I was a baby in long-clothes. I say, Porpoise, I thought you told me that the Bay of Biscay was always smooth at this time of the year."

"So it should be," replied our fat captain. "No rule without an exception though; but never mind, it will soon roll itself quiet; and then the cutter will do her best to make up for lost time."

The person evidently most at his ease was Will Bubble. Blow high or blow low it seemed all the same to him: he sang and whistled away as happily as ever.

"Oh! oh! oh! you jolly dog, don't mock us in our misery!" exclaimed Carstairs, with a groan.

"On no account," answered Will, with a demure

look. "I'll betake myself to the deck, and smoke my weed in quiet."

On deck he went, and seated himself on the companion-hatch, where he held on by a becket secured for the purpose; but as to smoking a cigar, that was next to an impossibility, for the wind almost blew the leaves into a flame. I was glad to go on deck, also, for the skylights being battened down, made the cabin somewhat close. The cutter rode like a wild-fowl over the heavy seas, which, like dark walls crested with foam, came rolling up as if they would engulf her. Just as one with threatening aspect approached her, she would lift her bows with a spring, and anon it would be found that she had sidled up to the top of it.

It was a wild scene—to a landsman it must have appeared particularly so. The dark heavy clouds close overhead; the leaden seas, not jumping and leaping as in shallow waters, but rising and falling, with majestic deliberation, in mountain masses, forming deep valleys and lofty ridges, from the summits of which, high above our heads, the foam was blown off in sheets of snowy whiteness with a hissing sound, interrupted by the loud flop of the seas as they dashed together.

We were not the only floating thing within the compass of vision. Far away I could see to windward, as the cutter rose to the top of a sea, the canvas of a craft as

we were hove-to. She was a small schooner, and though we undoubtedly were as unsteady as she was, it seemed impossible, from the way she was tumbling about, that anything could hold together on board her.

I had rejoined the party in the cabin, when an exclamation from Bubble called us all on deck.

"The schooner has bore up, and is running down directly for us!" he exclaimed.

So it was; and in hot haste she seemed indeed.

"Something is the matter on board that craft," said Porpoise, who had been looking at her through his glass. "Yes, she has a signal of distress flying."

"The Lord have mercy on the hapless people on board, then!" said I. "Small is the help we or any one else can afford them."

"If we don't look out she'll be aboard us, sir," sung out Snow. "To my mind, she's sprung a leak, and the people aboard are afraid she'll go down."

"Stand by to make sail on the cutter; and put the helm up," cried Porpoise. "We must not let her play us that trick, at all events."

On came the little schooner, directly down for us, staggering away under a close-reefed fore-topsail, the seas rolling up astern and threatening every instant to wash completely over her. How could her crew expect that we could aid them? still, it was evidently

their only hope of being saved—remote as was the prospect. They might expect to be able to heave-to again under our lee, and to send a boat aboard us. The danger was that in their terror they might run us down, when the destruction of both of us was certain. We stood all ready to keep the cutter away, dangerous as was the operation—still it was the least perilous of two alternatives. We were, as may be supposed, attentively watching every movement of the schooner; so close had she come that we could see the hapless people on board stretching out their arms, as if imploring that aid which we had no power to afford them. On a sudden they threw up their hands; a huge sea came roaring up astern of them; they looked round at it—we could fancy that we almost saw their terror-stricken countenances, and heard their cry of despair. Down it came, thundering on her deck; the schooner made one plunge into the yawning gulf before her. Will she rise to the next sea?

"Where is she?" escaped us all. With a groan of horror we replied to our own question—"She's gone!"

Down, down she went before our very eyes—her signal of distress fluttering amid the seething foam, the last of her we saw. Perhaps her sudden destruction was the means of our preservation. Some dark objects were still left floating amid the foam; they

were human beings struggling for life; the sea tossed them madly about—now they were together, now they were separated wide asunder. Two were washed close to us; we could see the despairing countenance of one poor fellow; his staring eye-balls; his arms outstretched as he strove to reach us. In vain—his strength was unequal to the struggle; the sea again washed him away, and he sunk before our sight. His companion still strove on; a sea dashed towards us; down it came on our deck. "Hold on, hold on, my lads!" sung out Porpoise.

It was well that all followed the warning, or had we not, most certainly we should have been washed overboard. The lively cutter, however, soon rose again to the top of a sea, shaking herself like a duck after a dive beneath the surface. As I looked round to ascertain that all hands were safe, I saw a stranger clinging to the shrouds; I with others rushed to haul him in, and it was with no little satisfaction that we found that we had been the means of rescuing one of the crew of the foundered schooner from a watery grave. The poor fellow was so exhausted that he could neither speak nor stand, so we carried him below, and stripping off his wet clothes, put him between a couple of warm blankets. By rubbing his body gently, and pouring down a few drops of hot

brandy and water, he was soon recovered. He seemed very grateful for what had been done for him, and his sorrow was intensely severe when he heard that no one else of the schooner's crew had been saved.

"Ay, its more than such a fellow as I deserve!" he remarked.

I was much struck by his frank and intelligent manners, when having got on a suit of dry clothes, he was asked by Hearty into the cabin, to give an account of the catastrophe which had just occurred.

"You see, gentlemen," said he, "the schooner was a Levant trader. Her homeward-bound cargoes were chiefly figs, currants, raisins, and such-like fruit. A better sea-boat never swam. I shipped aboard her at Smyrna last year, and had made two voyages in her before this here event occurred. We were again homeward bound, and had made fine weather of it till we were somewhere abreast of Cape Finesterre, when we fell in with some baddish weather, in which our boats and caboose were washed away; and besides this, we received other damage to hull and rigging. We were too much knocked about to hope to cross the Bay in safety, so we put into Corunna to refit. The schooner leaked a little, though we thought nothing of it, and as we could not get at the leak, as soon as we had got the craft somewhat to rights, we

again put to sea. We had been out three days when this gale sprang up, and the master thought it best to heave the vessel to, that she might ride it out. The working of the craft very soon made the leak increase; all hands went to the pumps, but the water gained on us, and as a last chance, the master determined to run down to you in the hopes that before the schooner went down, some of us might be able to get aboard you: you saw what happened. Oh! gentlemen, may you never witness the scene on board that vessel, as we all looked into each other's faces, and felt that every hope was gone! It was sad to see the poor master as he stood there on the deck of the sinking craft, thinking of his wife and seven or eight little ones at home whom he was never to see again, and whom he knew would have to struggle in poverty with the hard world! He was a good, kind man; and to think of me being saved, a wild, careless chap, without any one to care for him, who cares for nobody, and who has done many a wild, lawless deed in his life, and who, maybe, will do many another! I can't make it out, it passes my notion of things."

Will Bubble had been listening attentively to the latter part of the young seaman's account of himself. He walked up to him with an expression of feeling I did not expect to see, seemingly forgetful that any one

else was present, and took his hand:—"God in his mercy preserved you for better things, that you might repent of all your follies, and vices, and serve Him in future. Oh, on your knees offer up your heartfelt thanks to Him for all he has done for you!"

Hearty and Carstairs opened their eyes with astonishment, as they heard Will speaking.

"Why, Bubble, what have——?" began Hearty.

"I have been thinking," was the answer: "I had time while you fellows lay sick; and I bethought me how very easily this little cockle-shell might go down, and take up its abode among the deposits of this Adamite age' (Will was somewhat of a geologist), 'and how very little we all were prepared to enter a pure state of existence."

"That's true, sir," said the seaman, not quite understanding, however, Bubble's remarks, "that's just what I thought before the schooner sank. I am grateful to God, sir; but, howsomdever, I feel that I am a very bad, good-for-nothing chap."

"Try to be better, my friend; you'll have help from above if you ask for it?" said Bubble, resuming his seat.

"Why, where did you get all that from?" asked Carstairs, languidly; "I didn't expect to hear you preach, old fellow."

"I got it from my Bible," answered Bubble. "I'm very sure that's the only book of sailing directions likely to put a fellow on a right course, and to keep him there, so I hope in future to steer mine by it; but I don't wish to be preaching. It's not my vocation, and a harum-scarum careless fellow as I am is not fitted for it; only all I ask of those present is to think —to think of their past lives; how they have employed their time—whether in the way for which they were sent into the world to employ it, in doing all the good to their fellow-creatures they can; or in selfish gratification; and to think of the future, that future without an end—to think if they are fitted for it—for its pure joys—its never-ending study of God's works; to think whether they have any claim to enter into realms of glory—of happiness."

Will sprang on deck as he ceased speaking. He had evidently worked himself up to utter these sentiments, so different to any we should have conceived him to have possessed. I never saw a party of gentlemen more astonished, if not disconcerted. Had not Tom Martin, the young seaman just saved, been present, I do not know what might have been said. Still the truth, the justice, the importance of what Bubble had said struck us all, though perhaps we thought him just a little touched in the upper story,

to venture thus giving expression to his feelings. While Tom Martin had been giving an account of himself, I had been watching his countenance, and it struck me that I had seen him somewhere before.

"You've been a yachtsman, I think," I observed; "I have known your face, I am sure."

"Yes, sir," said he, frankly. "And if I mistake not, I know yours. I used to meet you at Cowes last year; but the craft I belonged to I can't say was a yacht, though its owner called her one. I'm sure you gentlemen won't take advantage of anything I say against me; and so I'll tell you all about the matter: The craft I speak of was the 'Rover' cutter, belonging to Mr. Miles Sandgate. I first shipped aboard her about three years ago: he gave high pay, and let us carry on aboard pretty much as we liked, when not engaged in his business. An old chum of mine, a man called Ned Holden, who was, I may say, born and bred a smuggler, first got me to join: there wasn't a dodge to do the revenue which Ned wasn't up to; and he thought no more harm of smuggling than of eating his dinner; I didn't inquire how the 'Rover' was employed: she belonged to a gentleman who paid well, and that's all I asked, though I might have suspected something. She had just come from foreign parts, and the people who had then been in her

talked of all sorts of curious things they had done. Smuggling was just nothing to what she'd been about. Mr. Sandgate seemed to have tried his hand at everything. He had been out in the China seas, running opium among the long pigged-tailed gentlemen of that country. More than once he had some hot fighting with the Government revenue-vessels, and several times he was engaged with the pirates, who swarm, they say, in those seas. I did not hear whether he made money out there, but after a time he got tired of the work, and shaped a course for England. On his way, after leaving the Cape of Good Hope, he fell in with a craft, which he attacked and took. She was laden with goods of all sorts fitted for the markets in Africa, and intended to be exchanged for slaves. Besides them she had the irons, and all the other fittings for a slaver. Such vessels sail without a protection from any Government. After he had taken everything he wanted, he hove the rest overboard, and then told the crew that he gave them their liberty, and that they might make the best of their way back to the parts from whence they came. With the goods he had thus obtained, he stood for the slave-coast: he had acquaintance there, as everywhere else; indeed it would be difficult to say in what part of the world he would not find himself at home. He was not long in fitting the 'Rover' inside

into a regular slave-vessel, but outside she looked as honest and harmless as any yacht. He ran up the Gaboon, or one of those rivers on the slave-coast—I forget which exactly—where lived a certain Don Lopez Mendoza, the greatest slave-dealer in those parts; besides which, as I heard say, it would be difficult to find anywhere a bigger villain. Well, he and Mr. Sandgate were hand-in-glove, and one would have done anything for each other. They were fairly matched, you may depend on it; however that might be, the Don took all the goods Mr. Sandgate brought him, and asked no questions, and filled his vessel in return with a lot of prime slaves and water, and farina enough to carry them across to Havannah. As soon as he got them on board, he was out of the river again, and loosening his jib, away he went with some two hundred human souls stowed under hatches, in a craft fit to carry only thirty or forty in comfort. She had a quick run across, and escaped all the ships of war looking after slavers. Mr. Sandgate there sold the blacks for a good round sum, and thought he had done a very clever thing. However, he does not seem to be a man to keep money, though he is ready enough to do many an odd thing to get it. He gave his crew a handsome share of the profits: he and they went ashore at the Havannah and spent it as fast as they

had made it, just in the old buccaneering style I've heard tell of, in all sorts of wild games and devilry, till I rather fancy the Dons were glad to be rid of them. When their money was nearly all gone, they went aboard again and made sail. I don't mean to say but what I suppose Mr. Sandgate had some left. He had also armed the cutter, and stored and provisioned her completely for a voyage round the world.

Once more he stood across for the African coast. He had heard, it appears, that one of those store-ships I was speaking of, which supply slavers with goods and provisions, and irons and stores, was to be met with in a certain latitude. He fell in with her, and without asking her leave or saying a word, he ran her alongside, and before her people had time to stand to their arms, he had mastered every one of them. He never ill-treated any one; but he just clapped them in irons till he had rifled the vessel, and then leaving them a somewhat scant supply of provisions and water, he, as before, told them that they were at liberty to make the best of their way home again.

"Some men would, perhaps, have gone back to the coast, taken in a cargo of slaves, and returned to the Havannah or the Brazils, but our gentleman was rather too cautious to run any such risk. He knew that he had made enemies who would try to prove him a

pirate with or without law; so he just goes off the Gaboon, and sends in a note to his friend Don Lopez, to say that he had got a rich cargo for him, which he should have for so many dollars, two thousand or more below its value. The Don, in return, despatched two or three small craft with the sum agreed on aboard, and all being found right and fair, the exchange was quickly made, and Mr. Sandgate once more shaped a course for England. As you may suppose, every one was sworn to secrecy aboard; but, bless you, the sort of chaps he had got for a crew didn't much care for an oath; and besides, as it was that they mightn't say anything out of the ship, they didn't mind talking about it to me and others who afterwards joined her. He brought nome a good round sum of money; but he took it into his head to go up to London, and what with gambling and such-like ways, he soon managed to get rid of most of it. He had got tired, it seems, of having his neck constantly in a noose, so he took to the quieter occupation of smuggling; he didn't do it in the common way like the people along the coast, but in a first-rate style like a gentleman. He had some relatives or other rich silk merchants in London, and he undertook to supply them with goods to any amount free of duty. There was nothing new in the plan, for it was an old dodge of this house, by which

they had made most of their money. You would be surprised, gentlemen, to hear of the number of people employed in the business, and who well knew it was against the laws. First, there were the agents in France to buy the goods, and to have them packed in small bales fit for running; then they had to ship them; next there were the cutters and other craft to bring them over, and the people to assist at their landing; and the carters with their light carts to bring them up to London; and the clerks in the warehouse in London, many of whom knew full well that not a penny of duty had ever been paid on the goods; and the shop people, too, who knew full well the same thing, as they could not otherwise have got their articles so cheap. It's a true saying, that one rascal makes many; and so it was in this case."

Much to the same effect Tom told us about Sandgate; but as with several of the points the readers are already acquainted, I need not repeat them. Tom frankly acknowledged that he was on board the 'Rover' when Sandgate attempted to carry off Miss Manners; but he seemed to be little aware of the enormity of the offence. He said that he fancied the young lady had come of her own free will, as Sandgate had made the crew believe a tale to that effect.

"But what became of him after that?" I asked,

eagerly. "Did he return to the coast of Africa, and turn pirate again?"

"No, sir," answered Martin. "He had several plans of the sort though, I believe; but at last we stood for the Rock of Gibraltar, and ran through the Straits into the Mediterranean. We could not make out what Mr. Sandgate was about: we touched at two or three places on the African coast, and he had some communication with the Moors. To my mind he scarcely knew himself what he would be at: he spoke and acted very often like a person out of his wits. Sometimes we would be steering for a place, and our course would be suddenly altered, and we would go back from whence we came. However, we got higher and higher up the Mediterranean. We did not touch at Malta, but stood on till we got among the Greek islands: there he seemed quite at home, and was constantly having people aboard whom he treated as old friends. Still we did nothing to make the vessel pay her way, and that was very unlike Mr. Sandgate's custom. After a time we ran on to Smyrna: we thought that we were going to take in a cargo of figs and raisins, and to return home. One day, however, a fine Greek polacca brig stood into the harbour, and Mr. Sandgate, after examining her narrowly, went on board her: on his return, calling us together, he said that as

he was going to sell the cutter, he should no longer have any need of our services; and that as he was very well pleased with the way we had more than once stuck by him, he would therefore add five pounds to the wages of each man. We all cheered him and thought him a very fine fellow; and so I believe he would have been had he known what common honesty means. The 'Rover' was sold next day, and we all had to bundle on shore and look out for fresh berths. When we were there I heard some curious stories about that polacca brig; and all I can say is, that if I had been aboard a merchantman and sighted her, I shouldn't have been comfortable till we had got clear of her again: whether Mr. Sandgate went away in her or not, I cannot say for certain; all I know is that the polacca brig left Smyrna in a few days. The crew of the 'Rover' joined different vessels, and though I was very often on shore, I saw no more of him. The rest of my story you know, gentlemen: I shipped on board the schooner which you lately saw go down."

"Very extraordinary story altogether," exclaimed Hearty, as soon as Tom Martin had left the cabin, highly pleased with his treatment. "If you had not been able to corroborate some of it, Brine, I certainly should not have felt inclined to believe it."

"I know the circumstances of one quite as extra-

ordinary," said Porpoise. "Some day I will tell it you if you wish it. I should not be surprised when we get up the Straits if we hear more of Mr. Sandgate and his doings. He is evidently a gentleman not addicted to be idle; though, clever as he is, he will some day be getting his neck into a halter."

"I should think it was well fitted for one by this time," added Carstairs; "but I say, Porpoise, lets us have your story at once, there's nothing like the present time for a good thing when it can be got, and we want something amusing to drive away all the bitter blue devilish feelings which this confounded tumblefication of a sea has kicked up in our insides."

"You shall have it with all my heart, and without delay," answered Porpoise. "All I have first to say is, that as I was present during many of the scenes, and as descriptions of the others were given me, strange as the account may appear, it is as true as everything we have just heard about that fellow Sandgate. I could almost have fancied that he and the hero of my story were one and the same person."

Our curiosity being not a little excited by this prelude, in spite of the rolling and pitching of the vessel, seldom has a more attentive audience been collected as our jovial companion began his story.

CHAPTER XIII.

LIEUTENANT PORPOISE'S STORY.—THE BLACK SLAVER.—THE SPANISH MAIDEN.—THE DESERTER'S DREAM.—THE FLIGHT.

THE BRITISH CRUISER.

"KEEP a bright look-out, Collins, and let me be called if anything like a sail appears in sight," said Captain Staunton, as he was quitting the quarter-deck of his majesty's brig 'Sylph,' which he had the honour to command. She was then stationed on the coast of Africa. Some years have passed by, it must be remembered, since the time to which I now allude.

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the first-lieutenant, who was the officer addressed. "With so many sharp eyes on board, it shall be hard if we miss seeing him, should he venture to approach the coast, and if we see him, harder still if he escape us."

Captain Staunton descended to his cabin, and feverish and ill from long watching and the effects of the pestiferous climate, he threw himself into his cot

and endeavoured to snatch a few hours' repose, to better prepare himself for the fresh exertions he expected to be called on to make. But sleep, which kindly so seldom neglects to visit the seaman's eyelids, when wooed even amid the raging tempest, refused for some time to come at his call.

"I would sacrifice many a year's pay to catch that fellow," he continued, as he soliloquized half aloud. "The monstrous villain! while he lives I feel that the stain yet remains on the cloth he once disgraced. We will yet show him that the honour of the service cannot be insulted with impunity, although he dares our vengeance by venturing among us when he knows every vessel on the station is on the watch for him. And yet I once regarded that man as a friend. I loved him almost as a brother, for I thought his heart beat with the most noble sentiments. I thought him capable of the like deeds; but all the time he must have been a most accomplished hypocrite, though still he has one good quality, he is brave, or perhaps, it may be, he possesses rather physical insensibility to danger and utter recklessness of all consequences. He started fairly in life, and at one time gave good promise of rising in his profession. I knew him to be wild and irreligious; but I fancied his faults arose from thoughtlessness and high spirit, and I hoped

that experience of their ill effects and a good example would cure them; but I now see that vice, from an ill-regulated education, was deeply rooted in him, and, alas! has that good example which might have saved him always been set him? I fear not. Ah! if those in command could foresee the dreadful results of their own acts, of their careless expressions, they would keep a better watch over themselves, and often shudder with horror at the crime and misery they have caused."

With a prayer to Heaven to enable him to avoid the faults of which he felt with pain that he had himself too often been guilty, the commander of the brig fell asleep.

The officer of the watch, meantime, continued his walk on the quarter-deck, his thoughts taking a turn very similar to those of his chief, for they had often together discussed the subject, and the same train of ideas were naturally suggested by the same circumstance, as he also had known the person of whom the captain was thinking.

The 'Sylph' was at this time some miles off the African coast, which, although not seen from the deck, was faintly distinguishable from the mast-head; it appeared like a long blue line drawn on the ocean with a slight haze hanging over it, scarcely to be perceived by unpractised eyes. The part

visible was about the mouth of the Pongos River, a well-known slave depôt, the favourite resort of the Spanish South-American slavers.

The surface of the ocean was smooth, although occasionally ruffled by a light breeze, which, coming from seaward, served to cool the brows of the crew and restore some vigour to their exhausted limbs; yet there was the usual swell, which seldom leaves the bosom of the Atlantic to perfect tranquillity. It came in from the west, slowly and silently, making the vessel roll from side to side like a drunken man. Though she was not, it must be understood, at anchor, she had not a stitch of canvas spread which would have contributed, had there been any wind, to steady her. All her sails were closely furled, but her studden-sail booms were at their yard-arms, their gear was rove, and the studden-sails themselves were on deck, ready to set in a moment. The boats, too, were clear to hoist out in an instant, and there was every sign on deck that the now apparently listless crew would, at first sound of the boatswain's whistle, spring into life and activity, and that the now bare tracery of spars and rigging would, the second after, be covered with a broad sheet of snowy canvas.

The 'Sylph' had been about a year on the coast. When she left England, her officers and crew were a

particularly fine healthy set of men, and the whole of them could scarcely, in the course of their lives, have mustered a month's illness among them. Since they came to their present station, the second-lieutenant and second-master had died, as had two midshipmen and thirteen of the crew, and nearly all the remainder had, more or less, suffered, few retaining any traces of their former ruddy and healthy appearance.

They had, however, to be sure, before being well acclimated, or having learned the necessary precautions to take against illness, been exposed to a good deal of hard service in boats up the rivers, where were sown the seeds of the disease which afterwards proved so fatal among them. Fresh officers and men had been appointed to fill the places of those who had died, and the brig was now again the same model of discipline and beauty which she had before been. When Captain Staunton joined the brig, he is reported to have called the men aft, and to have made them a speech much to this effect:—

"Now, my men, that you may not have any long discussions as to the character of your new commander, I wish to let you clearly understand that I never overlook drunkenness or any other crime whatever, either in my officers or men. I shall not say whether I like flogging or not, but while it is awarded by the

articles of war, I shall inflict it. Remember, however, I would much rather reward than punish. The men who do their duty well and cheerfully, I will advance as far as I have the power. I wish this to be a happy ship, and it will be your own faults if you do not make it so. Now pipe down."

The men agreed, as they sat in knots together after they had knocked off work for the day, that they liked the cut of their new skipper's jib, and that his speech, though short, was good, and had no rigmarole in it.

He afterwards invited his officers to dine with him, and in the course of conversation impressed on their minds that he considered gross language and swearing not only ungentlemanly, but wicked, and that he was certain the men did not obey at all the more readily for having it applied to them; that the men would follow the example they set them; that their influence depended on their doing their duty, and that if they did it, the men would do theirs. "Drunkenness," he observed, "is by some considered a very venial offence, but as the lives of all on board, as the discipline of the ship depends on the judgment of those in command, however much I shall regret the necessity, I shall break any officer who is guilty of it." As Captain Staunton himself practised what he preached, and set an example of all the high qualities which adorn his

noble profession, the necessity he would have deplored, never occurred; punishment was very rare, and the 'Sylph' *was* a happy ship.

Having made this digression, we will return to the time when the 'Sylph' lay on the waste of waters rolling her polished sides in the shining ocean, while the drops of spray which they threw off sparkled like diamonds in the rays of the burning sun. Had it not been for the light breeze we spoke of, the heat would have been intolerable on deck, for there was not the usual shade from the sails to shelter the seamen from the fury of the burning orb; but all were far too eager for the appearance of a vessel they were looking for to think of the inconvenience.

Three days before, an English homeward-bound merchantman had spoken them, and brought them the information that a large slaver was every moment expected in the river; a very fast-sailing schooner, which had already once before escaped them, by the daring and good seamanship of her commander, who was supposed to be an Englishman. Thus much the crew knew, and they added their own comments, believing him to be a character similar to the famed Vanderdecken, or, at all events, in league with the prince of terror, Davy Jones.

They had already been two days thus watching,

after having ascertained, by sending the boats up the river, that the slaver was not there. Captain Staunton, knowing the man with whom he had to deal, was aware that his only chance of capturing him was by extreme caution. He had therefore furled all the sails of the brig in the way we have described, that she might not be discovered by the slaver, till the fellow had got close up to her, and he then hoped to be able, without a long chase, to bring her to action. Each night, as soon as it grew dusk, the 'Sylph' made sail and stood in-shore, in order better to watch the coast, and before daylight she was again at her former post. It has been asserted that the African cruisers have allowed the slavers to get into port, and have not attempted to capture them till they have got their slaves on board, in order either to gain the head-money, or to make more sure of their condemnation; but if this was ever done, Captain Staunton was not the person to do so; he knew, moreover, that the man who commanded the slaver he was in search of would not yield her up without a struggle, and, for the sake of saving many lives, which must otherwise inevitably be sacrificed, he was anxious to bring her to action before she got her slaves on board. The officer of the watch continued pacing the deck with his spy-glass under his arm, every now and then hailing the mast-

heads to keep the look-outs on the alert, but the same answer was each time given.

"Nothing in sight, sir."

"Thus the day wore on. Towards the evening the breeze, which had since the morning been sluggish, increased considerably; but as the current which is to be found in nearly every part of the ocean set in an opposite direction to it, the brig did not materially alter her position. A fresh hand had just relieved the look-out at the mast-head at eight bells in the afternoon watch. His eyes, from not being fatigued, were sharper than his predecessor's, and he had scarcely glanced round the horizon, when he hailed the deck with words which roused everybody up.

"A sail in sight!"

"Where away?" asked the officer of the watch. The brig's head was now tending on shore.

"Right over the starboard-quarter, sir," was the answer.

"Call the captain, Mr. Wildgrave," said the second-lieutenant, who had charge of the deck, to the midshipman of the watch.

"Which way is she standing?" asked the officer.

"Directly down for us, sir," was the answer.

In five seconds the captain himself was on deck, and the remainder of the officers soon after appeared.

The first-lieutenant went aloft with his glass, and on his return pronounced the stranger to be a large square-rigged vessel, but whether a man-of-war, a slaver, or an honest trader, it was difficult to say, though he was inclined to suppose her belonging to either of the two former classes, from the broad spread of canvas she showed. On she came towards them, probably ignorant of their vicinity, as, stripped as they were, they would not be perceived by her till long after she was seen by them.

"What do you now make her out to be, Mr. Collins?" inquired the commander of the first-lieutenant, who had again returned, after a second trip to the mast-head.

"A large schooner at all events, sir; and, if I mistake not, she is the 'Espanto.'"

"Pipe all hands on deck, then, for we shall soon be discovered, and must make sail in chase."

The men were in a moment at their stations, and in silence waited the orders of their commander. Still the stranger came on, her sails slowly rising, as it were, from out of the ocean. She was now clearly seen from the deck of the 'Sylph.' Apparently there was a very bad look-out kept on board her, or else she was not the vessel they supposed, as otherwise the British cruiser must before this have been perceived by her.

Captain Staunton and his officers stood watching her with almost breathless anxiety, with their glasses constantly at their eyes, ready to observe the first indication of any alteration in her course. Nearer and nearer she approached with studden-sails alow and aloft, on either side. Suddenly they were observed to be taken in, and the vessel's course was altered to the southward.

"Aloft, there, and make sail!" shouted the commander, in a quick tone. The men, with alacrity, sprang up the rigging; the sails were let fall, the tacks were sheeted home, and in a minute the 'Sylph,' under a spread of canvas, was standing on a bowline in chase of the stranger.

THE SPANISH MAIDEN.

We must now shift our scene to a different part of the world, and to a period much antecedent to that of which we have hitherto been speaking. The spot to which we allude is on the eastern coast of South America, in the northern part of that vast territory colonized by the inhabitants of Spain. There is a beautiful bay, or rather gulf, surrounded by lofty and picturesque cliffs, with deep ravines running up between them and several *haciendas*, or large

farm-houses, on the surrounding ground, generally picturesquely situated, with a view of the sea in the distance. Several vessels lay at anchor, proudly pre-eminent among which was a frigate, from whose peak the ensign of Great Britain floated in the breeze.

Some way inland was a mansion of considerable size, though only of one story, surrounded with deep verandahs—the style of architecture general in the country. It stood at the head of a ravine, towards which the windows of its principal rooms opened, so that the inhabitants enjoyed a fine view of cliffs and rocks, and trees of every form and hue, between which a sparkling torrent found its way to the ocean, which was seen beyond with the shipping in the harbour. In a room within the house a beautiful girl was seated close to the window, but she looked not on the scene without. Her eyes were turned downwards, for at her feet knelt a youth; his glance met hers; and there was a wildness in his look, an expression of pain on his brow, which seemed to demand her pity. He was dressed in the British uniform, the single epaulette on his shoulder betokening that he held the rank of lieutenant; but his complexion was swarthy in the extreme, and his tongue spoke with facility the language of Spain.

"Hear me, beloved one!" he exclaimed, pas-

sionately pressing her hand to his lips. "My ship sails hence in a few days, but I cannot tear myself from you. For your sake I will quit my profession, my country, and the thing men call honour, and will run the risk of death, if I am retaken—all—all for your sake. Do you love me, dearest one?"

The girl smiled faintly, and her eyes filled with tears. He again pressed her hand to his lips.

"Yes, yes; I feel that I am blessed, indeed," he continued in the same tone. "But you must conceal me, beloved one. My life is in your hands. There will be a strict search made for me in every direction when I am missed. You will hear vile tales invented to induce those who might be sheltering me to give me up, but believe them not. Will you promise to be my preserver, my guardian angel, my idol, and I will live but to show my gratitude?"

Where is the woman's heart which could resist such an appeal? The maiden's doubts and hesitations were gradually disappearing.

"But we have seen little of each other, señor. Your love for a poor girl like me cannot be so strong as for my sake to make you give up all men hold most dear. The sacrifice is surely not worth the price. I do not even know your name."

"Call me Juan, then," he answered. "But if

my fiery, ardent love meets no return, I will quit you; though, perchance, to suffer death. On board yonder accursed ship I cannot live. I am hated there; and hate in return."

"Oh, no, señor; I will not expose you to such danger," answered the maiden. "I have heard sad stories of that ship. Even yesterday, it is said, one of the officers murdered another, and that the murderer has fled into the country."

The young man started and turned pale, but instantly recovering himself, he looked up affectionately into her countenance.

"But do you believe the tale?" he asked.

"I cannot but believe, señor," she answered; "one of our slaves saw the murdered man on the beach where he fell, and the dagger sticking in his bosom."

"But how can you suppose from that circumstance that an Englishman did the deed?"

"Because the dagger was such as the young officers wear," answered the girl; "and they were seen walking together."

"Know you the name, then, of the supposed murderer?" he asked.

"I could not pronounce it if I did," she said.

"It matters not—but believe not the tale—at all events, you would not believe me guilty of such a deed?"

"Oh, heavens, certainly not!" she replied, casting a glance which told plainly the secret of her heart.

He saw that the victory was gained, and clasping her to his bosom, he urged her to form a plan for his concealment.

"No one saw me approach the house," he observed, "so you will not be suspected; yet hasten, for should I now be observed, our difficulties would be increased."

Where woman's wit is sharpened by love, she finds no difficulties in serving him she loves. In a short time the stranger was concealed within the roof of the mansion, where she might, without exciting suspicion, constantly communicate with him.

Juanetta, having thus obeyed the impulse of her heart, returned to her seat near the window to meditate on the act she had performed, and the responsible office she had undertaken.

"Yet who is the stranger to whom I have given my heart?" she thought; "he loves me, surely, or he would not tell me so; and I love him—he is so handsome, so eloquent—he narrates adventures so surprising—he has done such daring deeds. It is strange, too, that he should seek to leave the ship, and that another officer should have committed a murder—oh,

horrible, what fierce, bad men those on board must be, except my Juan!"

Poor girl! she was young, loving, and ignorant of the wickedness in the world, or she would have suspected even him. Her meditations were interrupted by the appearance of her father, accompanied by the alcalde, and two officers in British uniforms. They were conversing earnestly as they passed the window, and they thus did not observe her.

"There can be no doubt of it, señor," observed the alcalde to one of the English officers; "the murder must have been committed by him—his flight proves it."

Where can he have concealed himself?" said the officer. "I would give a high reward to whoever discovers him, for such a crime must not go unpunished."

"He must still be wandering about near the coast, for without a horse—and I cannot learn that any person has supplied him with one—he cannot have escaped into the interior. The scouts, also, I sent out, bring no intelligence of him."

On hearing these words, Juañetta turned pale, for dreadful suspicions crossed her mind; but she had vowed to protect the stranger, and she felt the necessity of appearing calm. She had scarcely time to compose herself before her father and his guests entered the apartment. Refreshments were ordered,

and as she was obliged to busy herself in performing the duties of a hostess, her agitation was not observed. During the repast, she listened eagerly to gain further information, but what she heard only served to increase her doubts and fears. At length her father, telling her that he would soon return, took his departure with his guests.

Unhappy Juanetta! she dared not believe what yet her reason told her was too true. Left alone, she burst into tears. They afforded some relief to her aching heart, and when calmness had again returned, she hastened to the place where she had concealed her dangerous guest. As she went, she resolved to tell him that she would see him no more, yet to assure him, that, her promise given, he was safe while under her father's roof. She thought she would confess all that had passed to her father; and, trusting to his generosity, entreat him to aid her in favouring the escape of the suspected criminal.

Fortunate for her had she been firm in her resolve. Alas, that passion should too often triumph over the dictates of reason! yet who can fathom the deep well of a woman's heart? Surely not she herself, while it remains free from the rubbish, the wickedness, the knowledge of the world, those things which choke it up and foul its pure waters. Juan lay sleeping on the

hard floor, yet so lightly, that he started the moment she slowly raised the trap-door which opened into the chamber, and grasping a pistol on which his hand had rested, he sprang to his feet. When he saw who was his visitor, his glance became less fierce, but still he did not quit his hold of his weapon. He was about to speak; but she, placing her finger to her mouth, signified to him to be silent till she had carefully closed the place of ingress.

"I have come, señor, to bid you prepare for instant flight," she spoke in a low tone and her voice faltered; "you cannot remain here in safety, for I have heard dreadful stories, and I feel sure you will be sought for here. They cannot be true; I know they cannot; but yet I wish they had not been spoken."

"Should all the world desert me, my Juanetta will still believe me true," exclaimed the young man as he approached her, and knelt at her feet; "do not credit those tales, dearest, they are told by my foes and tyrants to destroy me; but my vengeance will yet alight on their heads. Yet what care I what they say or do while you, sweet angel, are my protectress?"

He took the maiden's hand, and she did not withdraw it. He pressed her hand to his lips, and his imploring glance met her eyes, already suffused with tears. She smiled, for she could not believe him false;

that youth with his gallant air and bold look; crime cannot be an inhabitant of a figure so noble, she thought.

An arch-traitor was within the garrison, and the deceiver was victorious over the simple maiden. She dared not remain long in his company lest her absence might betray her guest. To one person alone did she confide her secret, a black slave who had attended her from a child, and loved her faithfully; her word was his law, and Mauro promised that no harm should befall the stranger. His own conceptions of right and wrong were not very clear, nor did he make very minute inquiries as to the truth of the story his mistress told him. He believed that the Englishman had been ill-treated and had avenged himself, and he was acute enough to discover that his young mistress loved the handsome stranger. He therefore considered it his duty to please her to the utmost of his power.

THE DESERTER'S DREAM.

Left again alone, Juan's weary limbs sank once more beneath the power of sleep; but though the frame was still, the mind refused to be at rest. He dreamed that he was again a boy, young, innocent, and happy; but yet all the time a consciousness of the bitter truth mocked the vain illusion, like some dark phantom

hovering over him; he felt, and knew that the dream was false, still it seemed vivid and clear like the reality.

He thought that he lay at the feet of his fond and gentle mother, while his proud father smiled at his youthful gambols. It was in a princely hall, decked with all the luxury wealth can supply: other children were there, but he was the eldest and best beloved, the inheritor of almost boundless riches—of title and power. He had early learned his own importance; foolish nurses had not been slow to give him the baneful lesson; and while his parents believed him to be all their hearts could wish, the noxious seeds were already taking root. Years rolled on; he had gained knowledge at school, and beneath the care of his tutor, but, as regards self-government or religious feelings, he was still less educated than the poorest peasant on his father's broad domains. At last the truth had burst on his father's mind. His son was passionate, headstrong, self-willed, and, worse, deceitful. Every means of reclaiming him had been tried in vain, and he had determined to send him to sea under a strict captain, who promised to curb, if not to break, his spirit, if severity could influence him.

Young Hernan stood before his father while his mother sat overpowered with grief. The carriage

was waiting which was to convey him to Portsmouth. He was unmoved, for filial affection had been swallowed up by selfishness, and he fancied that he was about to lead a life of freedom and independence. He had yet to learn what a man-of-war was like. His mother pressed him to her heart, and his father strove to bless him as he turned to quit the room, for he was still his son.

The carriage rolled off, and in a few hours he was on board the ship which was to be his home and school for three long years. He learned many a lesson, it is true, but the great one came too late for him to profit by it. The first three years of his naval career passed by, and many a wild act had he committed, such as had often brought him under the censure of his superiors. That he was unreformed his father felt too surely convinced, and he was accordingly again sent to sea.

He was no longer a boy, and the irregularities of that age had grown into the vices of manhood. Yet among his equals he had friends, and knowing their value, he took care to cultivate them. The most intimate was Edward Staunton, his superior in age by two years—one whose generous spirit, believing that he had discovered noble qualities in his companion, longed to win him back to virtue. Together they

paced the deck in the midnight watch, and spoke of their future prospects, till even Hernan believed that he had resolved to amend. There are calm and often happy moments in a sailor's life, when all the dangers of their floating home, except the watch on deck, are wrapped in sleep; and then many a youth pours into his attentive shipmate's ears the tale of his love, his hopes and fears, and pictures the beauty of the girl he has left behind—the lady of his heart, with whom he fondly fancies he shall some day wed. Such a tale did Staunton tell; and Hernan listened carelessly at first, but afterwards with interest, as the ardent lover, delighting in the picture he was conjuring up, described the surpassing beauty of his mistress.

"Then you must introduce me to your lovely Blanche, and let me judge whether she is as fair as you paint her," said Hernan to his companion; and Staunton, guileless himself, promised to gratify his wish.

"I shall not allow you to break your word, remember," added Hernan.

"Never fear," answered Staunton, laughing. "But see what a sudden change has come over the sky while we have been speaking! We shall have a reef in the topsails before many minutes are out."

It was true. When they began their watch the sky was studded with a million stars, the dark sea was calm, and a gentle breeze filled the sails of the noble frigate. Now wild clouds were coursing each other across the arch of heaven, the light foam flew over the ocean, and the ship heeled over to the rising blast.

Scarcely had he spoken, when the voice of the officer of the watch roused his sleeping men with the order to furl the top-gallant sails quickly, followed by that to take a reef in the top-sails. Hernan's duty had led him aloft. He was careless in keeping a firm hold. The ship gave a sudden lurch, and he found himself struggling in the wild waters. He could swim, but the fall had numbed his limbs, and the ship flew past him. Despair was seizing him, when he heard the cry which arose from the deck, of "a man overboard!" echoed by a hundred voices. He was sinking beneath the waves, when he felt a friendly hand grasping his arm, and once more he rose to the surface of the water, and the voice of Edward Staunton cheered him to fresh exertions. He saw, too, the bright light of the life-buoy, which floated at a short distance only from them. It was a fearful thing, though, to be left thus alone on that stormy sea, for the dim outline of the

frigate was scarcely visible, and she might be unable to fetch again, while the light continued burning, the spot where they were. For his sake, Staunton had thus risked his life. With great exertions Staunton dragged him to the life-buoy, and hanging on to it, they anxiously watched the approach of the frigate.

"The boat has been swamped, and we shall be left to perish miserably here," exclaimed Hernan. "Curses on my fate!"

"No," cried Staunton; "hark, I hear the shouts of the people in the boat pulling towards us. The frigate must have gone far to leeward before she could be hove-to to lower one."

Again the shouts were heard, and a dark object emerged from the obscurity which surrounded them. In a few minutes they were on board, and scarcely was the boat hoisted in than down came the tempest with tenfold fury, and vain would then have been any attempt to save him had he still been struggling in the waves. He was profuse in his professions of gratitude to Staunton, and he thought himself sincere.

The frigate returned home, her crew were paid off, and Staunton and his friend received their promotion.

"And now, Staunton, you must keep to your word and introduce me to your beautiful friend Miss Blanche

D'Aubigné," said Hernan, after they had been some time on shore, and had met by chance in London.

"Gladly," answered Edward; "I have told her all about you, and she will be most glad to see you."

So they went together to the village where the fair girl resided: it was at no great distance from the country-seat of Sir Hernan Daggerfeldt, the father of Edward's friend. Staunton had won his promotion by his own exertions; and another step, his commander's rank, was to be gained before he could hope to make Blanche his bride. Such was the decree of her father, who had given an unwilling consent to their union, and he felt that he had no right to murmur at the decision. A short stay on shore was all he could hope to enjoy, before he must again go afloat for two or three more weary years; but she was still very young, and he confided in her truth and love.

This Hernan knew: he was surprised and delighted when first introduced to Miss D'Aubigné, for her beauty far surpassed his expectations. He thought her far more lovely than any one he had ever met, when, with artless simplicity, she received him as the friend of her betrothed. Edward went to sea, and Hernan took up his abode at his father's seat. Every week his visits to the village of Darlington grew more frequent, and Blanche unsuspectingly received him

with pleasure, while her father, who knew his prospects, welcomed him cordially.

Hernan knew that Blanche looked on him as the friend of her intended husband, and he at first thought not of inquiring into his own feelings regarding her. Soon, however, a fierce passion sprang up in addition to the simple admiration he at first had felt. Indeed, he scarcely attempted to conceal it; but she was too pure-minded and unsuspecting to perceive the existence of the feelings she had inspired.

Thus matters went on till even she could no longer deceive herself as to Hernan's real feelings. Horrified at the discovery, she refused to see him more, and Hernan saw that he must make a bold stroke or lose her for ever. He called falsehood and treachery to his aid. He went to her father; he spoke of his own ardent love, of his future wealth, of the position he could offer; then he continued to express his regret that Edward, his friend, was unworthy of her, that he had expressed his anxiety to break off the connection, but was unwilling to wound her feelings by doing so abruptly, and therefore intended to write, when he had reached his station, to free her from her engagement. Mr. D'Aubigné listened, and believed what he wished to be true; but Blanche was long incredulous, and refused to credit the tale of her

intended's disloyalty. At last, however, the cruel letter came; it was enclosed in one to Hernan. It spoke of the impolicy of early engagements, of the misery of married poverty, of the difficulty of governing the affections, and of the danger of wedding when love has begun to decay.

Hernan watched the effect of the letter, and congratulated himself on its success; still Blanche disbelieved her senses, but dared not utter her suspicions. Hernan knew, too, that it was so, yet he trusted in the versatility of his talents to bring his scheme to a successful issue.

Her father's influence was exerted in his favour, and Blanche was told that she must discard her former lover from her heart. She had loved too truly, however, to obey the command, and she determined not to wed another till she had heard from his own lips that he was indeed changed.

Hernan Daggerfeldt knelt at the feet of Blanche D'Aubigné. He had seized her hand, and was pressing it with rapture to his lips, while she in vain endeavoured to withdraw it.

"Rise, sir, rise," she said; "you wrong me—you wrong him who is away—your friend, the preserver of your life. While he lives, I am his, and his alone!"

"I do not wrong him," he answered. "His nature

is fickle, and if he no longer loves you, will not woman's pride teach you to forget him?"

"I know not that he no longer loves me," she replied.

"Did not his letter convince you?" he asked.

"That letter! No, sir," she replied, rising proudly from her seat, and a smile of unwonted bitterness curling her lip. "That letter was a forgery."

"On my sacred word, on my soul, it was not!" he cried, vehemently. "It is you who wrong me and my devoted love. Be mine, and let me enjoy the only heaven I seek. If I speak not the truth, may the Powers above strike me this moment dead at your feet!"

Blanche shuddered at his words. At that instant a dark form seemed to rise up between them, and to gaze with threatening aspect at Hernan, while it shielded Blanche from him. Soon it assumed the form of Edward Staunton, and beckoning Hernan to follow, slowly receded from the room. Even the deceiver trembled, and, daring not to disobey, followed the phantom.

It led him through dark chambers, beneath roaring waterfalls, along dizzy heights, whence the sea-birds could scarce be seen in the depths below, on the wild shore, where the fierce waves dashed with terrific

fury, while the tempest raged, and the lightnings flashed around his head, and then with a derisive shriek which sounded high above the furious turmoil, it disappeared amid the boiling ocean.

"Such, traitor, shall be thy fate!" were the words it spoke.

Again Hernan dreamed that Blanche had promised to be his—a prize bought at the cost of further perjury. Edward for long had been unheard of; he was still a rover in far-off climes. Mr. D'Aubigné was satisfied and rejoiced at the thoughts of finding a wealthy husband for his daughter. Hernan was with his intended bride when a messenger arrived, breathless with haste, to summon him to the death-bed of his parent.

He hurried thither to listen to a tale the old man falteringly whispered into his ear; it was enough to freeze up the current in his veins. A stigma was on his birth, and instant precautions were necessary, or the fatal secret would be discovered which would consign him to poverty and disgrace.

"You are my child," said the proud baronet, "yet for long my wife had borne me none; at length one came into the world and died. You took its place, and my wife believed you to be her own offspring. The change was ill-managed, and the deceit is dis-

covered by one who is my enemy, and will be yours. I fancied that no one knew it, till some years ago he came and convinced me that he was aware of the truth. He then told me that should you be worthy to succeed to my rank and fortune, the secret should die with him; but if not, my first lawful child, whom he insisted on educating under his own inspection, should be declared to have his rights. Though the terms seemed hard, I was obliged to yield to his demands, and have ever since been his slave. By his orders you were sent to sea, and will be compelled shortly again to go; and by his orders I have made you acquainted with the dreadful tale I have now told you. I know him well, and you too must become his slave. He will probably insist on your again going to sea, and you must obey him, or rue the consequences."

Scarcely stopping to close his father's eyes, who died shortly after this disclosure, Hernan hurried off to endeavour to propitiate the arbitrator of his destiny. The old man was inflexible. He insisted on his forthwith returning to sea, and refused to sanction his marriage with Blanche. Hernan had good cause to suspect that his character was seen through; he dared not disobey. His appointment to the —— frigate soon arrived, and framing an excuse to Blanche, he prepared for his departure. Blanche received the

account without any regret, for though she was prepared to obey her father, she did not love Hernan, as he well knew. Her heart was still with one whom she had been told was false to her. The frigate on board which Hernan Daggerfeldt was the junior lieutenant sailed for the coast of South America. Hernan felt that he was no favourite with his brother-officers; his fierce temper and overbearing manner was one cause, while his constant scoffs at religion and honour was another. When off Rio, they fell in with a frigate carrying despatches to England. It was a dead calm, and a boat from her was sent on board them to learn intelligence from home. Two officers were in the boat, one was Staunton: Hernan in vain endeavoured to avoid him. Staunton had a thousand questions to ask, which Hernan might be able to answer respecting his beloved Blanche. Was she well? Had she received his letters?—none of hers had reached him. Hernan made the most plausible answers he could invent. They spoke in the presence of two of his brother-officers, and one of them, an old friend of Staunton's, knew the truth. Accordingly, drawing him aside, he told him at once that he believed Hernan had been speaking falsehoods. Staunton's indignation knew no bounds, and he taxed Hernan with his duplicity and falsehood, though the

sanctity of the quarter-deck prevented him from proceeding to extremities. Hernan defended himself from the accusation, though he felt that he was discovered, and he determined to revenge himself on the man who had unmasked him to Staunton. He, however, bided his time; but he suspected that by some means or other more of his secrets might be known to his shipmate.

The frigate had been for some time on the coast of America, when, receiving some damage in a heavy gale, she put into the harbour of —— to refit. She lay there for some time, and the officers were constantly, when duty allowed, on shore. It was a dark night, when Hernan, accompanied by young Selwin, the friend of Staunton, was returning after an excursion into the country, on board. They had left their horses at the town, and were walking along the beach on foot; young Selwin thoughtlessly alluded to Staunton and Blanche D'Aubigné, and while he spoke the spirit of a demon entered into Hernan Daggerfeldt's heart. A sharp cry awoke the stillness of night —a deed had been done no power on earth could recall. He fled he knew not whither; vipers seemed twining round his heart; burning coals were raining on his head, and while heavy weights were clogging his limbs, a thousand fierce bloodhounds urged him to

fly. He awoke, the perspiration standing in large drops on his brow, while he gasped for breath; yet there he still lay in the loft where Juanetta had concealed him. Was all that had occurred an empty dream, or was it the reacting of a dreadful reality?

THE FLIGHT.

The following morning Juan, or rather Hernan Daggerfeldt, was awoke by the entrance of Señor Ribiera's black slave, with a basket of provisions.

"Why does not your mistress come to me herself?" inquired Hernan, who dreaded being abandoned by the only human being in whom he could trust.

"Donna Juanetta is with her father, and till he goes out she cannot come to see you," answered the slave. "He is a stern man, and were he to discover that you are here without his leave, and that his daughter loved you, he would kill you without ceremony. Ah, señor! you do not know what these Spanish gentlemen are capable of."

"Well, you must take care that he does not discover. I am here till that cursed ship in the harbour has sailed away; and now listen to me—what is your name, though?"

"Mauro, at your service, señor," said the slave.

"There, Mauro—there is a piece of gold. You shall have a larger piece by-and-by. It will go towards buying your freedom."

"My freedom!" muttered the African. "What does that mean?—Ah, yes, I know. It would be of no value to me now. Had it come when I was yet young, and could have returned to those I loved across the ocean, I should have prized it. Now they are all dead, and those I love best are in this house. My mistress told me to do your bidding. What is it you require of me, señor?"

"First, I wish you to procure me a suit of Spanish clothes, fit for a gentleman to appear in, and then you must take this uniform, coat, and hat, and as soon as it is dark, carry them down to the sea-shore, and place them as if the waves had thrown them there. They will certainly be discovered, and it will appear that I have been drowned, and then no further search will be made after me."

"A very good idea, señor," said Mauro, rubbing his hands with pleasure, for he was delighted to be employed in a scheme by which those in authority, whom he looked upon as oppressors, might be deceived. Such is the feeling of slaves in general.

While her father took his siesta, Juanetta visited her prisoner, and Hernan employed the time in en-

deavouring to convince her of his love for her, and his innocence of the crime of which he was suspected. In both he succeeded too well.

In the evening Mauro returned with the suit of clothes he had purchased; and Hernan having exchanged them for his own, pierced the latter with his sword, and deliberately drawing blood from his arm, soaked them in it.

Mauro, who well understood what he was to do, wrapped them up in a bundle, and as soon as it was dark carried them off.

We will pass over several days, during which Daggerfeldt remained concealed without any one in the house suspecting that he was in the garret.

At last one morning Mauro came in rubbing his hands with delight. "You are free, señor, you are free!" he exclaimed; "the big ship with the many guns is even now sailing out of the harbour, and all you have got to do now is to come down to beg Señor Ribiera's pardon for living so long in his house without his leave, and to marry his daughter."

"Curses go with her!" ejaculated Hernan, fiercely. "I will still wreak my vengeance on some of those who sail on board her. But tell me, Mauro, did your lady say I might venture into her father's presence?"

"Not exactly, señor, and perhaps it might be as

well to prepare the old gentleman for your appearance, as he yet believes, like the rest of the world, that you are food for the sharks."

"Then, my good Mauro, go and urge her to come here to concert the best way to release me. I pant once more to stretch my limbs on the open shore, and to breathe the pure air of heaven."

Some time elapsed after the slave had gone to fulfil his mission before Juanetta appeared. She then came with a sad countenance and tears in her eyes.

"Oh, señor!" she said, "the ship has sailed, and I hoped that the news would have made us both happy; but, alas! when I told my father what I had done, and how I had preserved your life from those tyrants, he stormed and raved, and declared that I had behaved very wickedly, and that he would deliver you up to the authorities. Fortunately I did not tell him that you were still here; but, as Mauro had cautioned me, I led him to suppose that you had made your escape up the country."

"That was a happy idea of yours, my Juanetta," said Daggerfeldt. "Your father must in some way be gained to our wishes. You are his only child, and he is enormously rich, you say—plenty of gold stored up in bars in his house. Stay, I must think over the subject. Sit down by me and I will unfold my plans."

He was silent for some time, and then he continued, while Juanetta, who was incapable of fathoming the depths of his deceit, listened to him without suspicion.

"Now, Juanetta, dear, you must not be startled by the plan I am going to propose. From what you tell me, your father is prejudiced against me, and will not willingly give his consent to our marriage, so we must marry first and ask his forgiveness afterwards. He will then, I have no doubt, pardon us, and give us as much gold as we may require. Now, as I have no money, and no priest will marry us without, we must contrive to borrow some of his—we can return it afterwards, you know—I propose, therefore, that you show me some night where he keeps his gold, and then I will take a little of it, as much as we may require, and then we will fly together to the nearest place where we can find a priest to unite us. Shall we not do so, dearest? The plan may seem to you dangerous and wrong, but let no fears alarm you. We will afterwards explain our motives, and the old man will forgive you."

Poor Juanetta, had she known this world and the wickedness in it, would have flown with horror from the betrayer; but she was ignorant of its evil ways—she listened and hesitated. No arguments which sophistry could invent were left untried. The deceiver was victorious.

That night the keys of the old man's money-chests were stolen from beneath his pillow. The following morning he found them where he had placed them, and, unsuspecting, did not think of counting his hoarded gold.

His daughter dared not again speak to him of the stranger she had preserved. He believed that he had long ago escaped into the interior, and forbore to make further inquiries about him. Daggerfeldt was no longer an inhabitant of his house.

A foreign merchant, of considerable wealth at command, had arrived, it was said, from the interior, and had taken up his abode in the town. He had become the purchaser of a large schooner, which was taking in a cargo of goods for the African coast. Don Manuel Ribiera, on hearing this, invited the stranger to his house, for he himself was a dealer in slaves, and wished to make some arrangements respecting the return cargo.

On the unexpected appearance of the stranger, Donna Juanetta started; but her presence of mind quickly returned, for she felt the importance of discretion. Her father observed her momentary confusion, and apologized to his guest, attributing it to her being unaccustomed to receive strangers.

Soon afterwards, some business called Señor Ribiera

from the room, and Juanetta was left alone with their guest.

"Oh, Juan, how could you venture here?" she exclaimed to the pretended merchant, who was no other than Daggerfeldt; "my father will discover you, and your ruin and mine must follow."

"No fear, dearest. He is blinded by the prospect of profit," answered Hernan; "he has, too, scarcely seen me before, and then only in uniform. It was also necessary to run some risk to gain our ends. I have made all the necessary arrangements, and this night you are to be mine. The cost, however, has been considerable, and we must borrow a little more from your father's money-chests to pay the priest who is to unite us."

Daggerfeldt had scarcely arranged his plans with his credulous dupe, when Señor Ribiera returned. As may be supposed, he was induced to arrange a plan to dispose of his slaves on his return on terms highly advantageous to the old slave-dealer, and after being entertained magnificently, he was conducted to his sleeping-apartment. Instead of retiring to rest, Daggerfeldt employed himself in loading his pistols and listening attentively for the arrival of some one apparently, but not a sound disturbed the silence of night. At last, losing patience, he opened his door, and was

met by Juanetta. The poor girl was pale and trembling.

"Here are the keys," she said; "but, oh, señor, I do not like this work—surely it is very wicked!"

"Pretty fool," he answered, abruptly; "it is too late to recede now. There is nothing to alarm you. Wait in this room till I return." Saying this, he was about to leave her, when footsteps were heard approaching the house. He listened attentively.

"It is right," he observed, "those are some people I have engaged to assist us in our flight."

Just then, some men sprang into the room through the open window. Poor Juanetta uttered a cry of terror, but it was instantly silenced by Daggerfeldt, who ordered two of the men to take charge of her while the rest followed him to the chamber of Don Ribiera. The unhappy girl listened, horror-struck and bewildered. There was a cry and a groan, and soon afterwards Daggerfeldt returned, accompanied by the men carrying several heavy chests between them.

"Onward," said the traitor, "and you, my fair lady, must accompany us. The ship is waiting to bear us to far-off lands, where you may become my bride."

The next morning, the new slave schooner was seen in the offing, and when people went to the house of

Don Ribeira, he was found dead in his bed, his money-chests were gone, and his daughter had fled, while his slaves were only just awaking from a heavy sleep, for which none of them could account. Mauro, too, had disappeared, and all the watch-dogs were dead.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BLACK SLAVER—*continued.* — THE CHASE. — THE SLAVER.—THE CAPTURE.—THE ESCAPE.—THE PURSUIT.

THE CHASE.

We left her Britannic Majesty's brig 'Sylph' in chase of a strange sail on the coast of Africa. The wind was from the westward, and she was standing on a bowline to the southward, with the coast clearly seen broad on the lee-beam. Captain Staunton ordered every expedient he could think of to be tried to increase the speed of his vessel, for the stranger was evidently a very fast sailer, though it was at first difficult to say whether or not she was increasing her distance from them. At all events, the British crew soon saw that it would be hopeless to expect to come up with the stranger before dark, for the sun was just sinking below the horizon, and the thick mists were already rising over the wooded shore, and yet they appeared to be no nearer to her than they were when they first made sail in chase. It was a magnificent sailing-breeze, just sufficient for both vessels to carry their top-

gallant sails and royals without fear of springing their spars, and the sea was perfectly smooth, merely rippled over by the playful wind. Indeed, as the two vessels glided proudly along over the calm waters, they appeared rather to be engaged in some friendly race than anxious to lead each other to destruction. All the officers of the 'Sylph' were on deck with their glasses constantly at their eyes as the last rays of the sun tinged the royals of the chase, and so clearly was every spar and rope defined through that pure atmosphere, that it was difficult to believe that she was not within range of their guns. Captain Staunton and his first-lieutenant walked together on the weather side of the deck.

"Do you think she is the 'Espanto,' Mr. Collins?" asked the captain.

"I have no doubt about it, sir," answered the officer addressed. "I watched her narrowly when we chased her off Loanda the last time she was on the coast, and I pulled round her several times when she lay in the harbour of St. Jago da Cuba, just a year and a half ago."

"She has had a long run of iniquity," said the captain; "two years our cruisers have been on the look-out for her, and have never yet been able to overhaul her."

"That Daggerfeldt must be a desperate villain, if report speaks true," observed the lieutenant; "I think, sir, you seemed to say you once knew him."

"I did to my cost," answered Captain Staunton; "that man's life has been a tissue of treachery and deceit from his earliest days. He once disgraced our noble service. He murdered a shipmate and ran from his ship on the coast of America. It was reported for some time that he was dead, by his clothes having been found torn and bloody on the shore, and his family, fortunately for them, believed the story. It was, however, afterwards discovered that he had been sheltered by a Spanish girl, and in gratitude for his preservation he carried her off, robbed her father of all his wealth, and either frightened him to death or smothered him. The unhappy girl has, it is said, ever since sailed with him, and it is to be hoped she is not aware of the enormity of his guilt. Pirate and slaver, he has committed every atrocity human nature is capable of."

"A very perfect scoundrel in truth, sir," answered Mr. Collins: "it was said, too, I remember, that he was going to marry a very beautiful girl in England. What an escape for her!"

"No, he was not going to marry her," exclaimed the captain, with unusual vehemence. "Her father,

perhaps, wished it, but she would never have consented. Collins, you are my friend, and I will tell you the truth. That lady, Blanche D'Aubigné, was engaged to me, and never would have broken her faith to me while she believed me alive. By a series of forgeries, Daggerfeldt endeavoured to persuade her that I was false to her, though she would not believe him. On my return home she is to become my wife. We were to have married directly I got my promotion, but I was so immediately sent out here that I was able to spend but one day in her society. I wished to have secured her a pension in case this delightful climate should knock me on the head, but she would not hear of it. Poor girl, I have left her what little fortune I possess, Collins; I could not do less. Those who live on shore at ease can't say we enjoy too much of the pleasures of home, or don't earn the Queen's biscuit. Bless her Majesty!"

"I don't know that, sir. There are, I hear, though I never fell in with any of them, a set of lying traitors at home, who say we are no better than pirates, and want to do away with the navy altogether. If they were to succeed in their roguish projects, there would be an end of old England altogether, say I."

"They never will succeed, Collins, depend upon that. There is still too much sense left in the country; but if her Majesty's government were to employ her cruisers in any other part of the world than on this pestiferous coast, the cause of humanity would benefit by the change. For every prize we capture, ten escape, and our being here, scarcely raises the price of slaves in the Cuban and Brazilian markets five dollars a head; while the Spaniards and Portuguese, notwithstanding their treaties, do all they can to favour the traffic. Do we gain on the chase, do you think, Collins?"

"Not a foot, I fear, sir," answered the lieutenant. "That brig is a fast craft, and though I don't believe, as some of the people do, that the skipper has signed a contract with Davy Jones, she is rightly called by them the 'Black Slaver.'"

"If the breeze freshens, we may overhaul her, but if not, she may double on us in the dark, and again get away," observed the captain. "Take care a bright look-out is kept for'ard."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the lieutenant, repeating the order and adjusting his night-glass; "she hasn't altered her course, at all events."

By this time daylight had totally disappeared, although a pale crescent moon in the clear sky

afforded light sufficient for objects to be distinguished at some distance. Few of the officers turned in, but the watch below were ordered to their hammocks to recruit their strength for the services they might be required to perform on the morrow, as Captain Staunton had determined, should the wind fail, to attack the chase in his boats. When the enemy is well armed and determined, this is a very dangerous operation, and in the present instance there could be no doubt that he who commanded the 'Black Slaver' would not yield without a desperate resistance. Look-outs were stationed at the mast-heads as well as forward, and every eye was employed in endeavouring to keep her in sight—no easy task with the increasing darkness—for a light mist was gradually filling the atmosphere, and the moon itself was sinking into the ocean. The breeze, however, appeared to be increasing: the brig felt its force, and heeled gracefully over to it as the water bubbled and frothed against her bows.

"What are the odds we don't catch her after all?" said young Wildgrave to his messmate; "I hate these long chases, when one never comes up with the enemy."

"So do I," answered his companion. "But to tell you the truth, I have a presentiment that we

shall come up with her this time, and bring her to action, too. She has escaped us twice before, and the third time will, I think, be fatal to her. By-the-by, where is she though ?"

"Fore-yard, there," sang out the first-lieutenant, "can you see the chase ?"

'I did a moment ago, sir;—no, sir, I can see her nowhere.

A similar answer was returned from the other look-outs. She was nowhere visible.

THE SLAVER.

The 'Black Slaver' well deserved her name. Her hull was black, without the usual relief of a coloured ribbon; her masts and spars were of the same ebon hue, her cargo was black, and surely her decks were dark as the darkest night. She was a very large vessel, upwards certainly of three hundred tons, and also heavily armed with a long brass gun amid-ships, and ten long nines in battery, besides small brass swivel-guns mounted on her quarter, to aid in defending her against an attack in boats.

Her crew was composed of every nation under the sun, for crime makes all men brothers, but brothers who, Cain-like, were ready any moment to imbrue their hands in each other's blood; and their costume

was as varied as their language—a mixture of that of many nations. A mongrel Spanish, however, was the language in which all orders were issued, as being that spoken by the greater number of the people. She was a very beautiful and powerful vessel, and all the arrangements on board betokened strict attention to nautical discipline. For more than two years she had run her evil career with undeserved success, and her captain and owner was reputed to be a wealthy man, already in possession of several estates in Cuba. Slaving was his most profitable and safe occupation, mixed up with a little piracy as occasion offered without fear of detection. Several slavers had unaccountably disappeared, which had certainly not been taken by English cruisers, and others had returned to the coast complaining that they had been robbed of their slaves by a large armed schooner which had put on board a few bales of coloured cottons, with an order to them to go back and take in a fresh cargo of human beings. The 'Espanto' was more than suspected of being the culprit; but she was always so disguised that it was difficult to bring the accusation home to her, while they themselves being illegally employed, could obtain no redress in a court of law.

She had for some time been cruising, as usual, in the

hopes of picking up a cargo without taking the trouble of looking into the coast for it, when, weary of waiting, and being short of water and provisions, her captain determined to run the risk of procuring one by the usual method.

From the ruse practised by the 'Sylph' she was not seen by his look-outs till he was nearly close up to her. He was in no way alarmed, however, for he recognized the British man-of-war, and knowing the respective rate of sailing of the two vessels, felt certain, if the wind held, to be able to walk away from her. To make certain what she was, he had stood on some time after he had first seen her, a circumstance which had, as we mentioned, somewhat surprised Captain Staunton and his officers. Having ascertained that the sail inside of him was the 'Sylph,' he hauled his wind, and making all sail, before an hour of the first watch had passed, aided by the darkness, he had completely run her out of sight. When he stood in he had been making for the Pongos river; but being prevented from getting in there, he determined to run for the Coanza river, some forty miles further to the south, before daybreak, and as the mouth is narrow, and entirely concealed by trees, he had many chances in his favour of remaining concealed there while the British man-of-war passed by. A slave-agent, also, of

his resided in the neighbourhood, who would be able to supply him at the shortest notice, and at moderate prices, with a cargo of his fellow-beings. At this rendezvous he knew there would be a look-out for him, and that there were pilots ready to assist him in entering the river.

"Square the yards and keep her away, Antonio," he sung out to his first-mate, a ferocious-looking Mulatto, who was conning the vessel. "We are just abreast of —— Point, and Diogo, if he has his eyes open, ought to see us."

The helm was kept up, the yards were squared, and the vessel stood stem on towards the shore.

Before long the dark line of the tree-fringed coast was visible, when she was again brought to the wind; her lower sails were furled, and she was hove-to under her topsails.

"We must make a signal, or the lazy blacks will never find us out, señor captain," observed Antonio to his chief.

"Yes, we must run the risk: we shall not be in before daylight if we do not, and the enemy will scarcely distinguish from what direction the report of the gun comes. Be smart about it though."

A gun from the lee quarter was accordingly discharged, the dull echoes from which were heard re-

bounding along the shore, and directly afterwards a blue light was fired, the bright flame giving a spectre-like appearance to the slaver and her evil-doing crew. They might well have been taken for one of those phantom barks said to cruise about the ocean either to warn mariners of coming danger or to lure them to destruction.

Soon afterwards a small light was seen to burst out, as it seemed, from the dark line, and to glide slowly over the water towards them: gradually it increased, and as it approached nearer, it was seen to proceed from a fire burning in the bow of a large canoe pulled by a dozen black fellows. When it came alongside, two of them scrambled on board, and recognizing the captain, welcomed him to the coast. Their language was a curious mixture of Spanish, Portuguese, English, and African.

"Ah, señor captain, berry glad you et Espanto, come esta noche, viento es favoravel, for run up de river Diogo—me vos on de look out you, sabe."

Having thus delivered himself, the chief pilot went aft to the helm with much the same air as one of his European brethren, habited in Flushing coat and tarpaulin hat, although the only garment he boasted was a blue shirt, secured at the waist by a piece of spun-yarn, and a red handkerchief bound round his head.

"Up with the helm, then square away the yards," sung out the captain, and the vessel, under the direction of the negro, was standing dead on to the apparently unbroken line of dark shore.

It required great confidence in the honesty and knowledge of the pilot for the crew not to believe that he was running the schooner on shore, for such a thing had been more than once before done.

"Remember," whispered Antonio, as he passed him, "if the vessel touches, my pistol sends a ball through your head."

"No tien duvida, señor, contremestre," answered Quacko, quite unmoved by the threat, as being one to which he was well accustomed.

"Viento favoravel, rio fundo. Have de anchor pronto to let go."

The bowsprit of the schooner was now almost among the mangrove-bushes.

"Stivordo," sung out the pilot.

A yellow line of sand was seen over her quarter. This seemed to spring up from the sea on either side, like dark shapeless phantoms eager to destroy the slaver's crew, the spirits of those their cruelty had sent from this world. Taller and taller they grew, for so calmly did the vessel glide on, that she appeared not to move, yet the broad open sea was completely shut out

from the view of those on board; a narrow dark line, in which the reflection of a star was here and there visible, was the only water seen. Still on the schooner moved.

"Bombordo," sung out the pilot.

The helm was put to port, and the schooner glided into another passage, her yards, as they were squared away or braced up to meet the alterations in her course, almost brushing the branches of the lofty trees. For some minutes more she ran on, till the stream grew suddenly wider, and a little bay, formed by a bend of the shore, appeared on the starboard hand, into which she glided. The anchor was let go, the topsails were furled, and so entirely was she concealed by the overhanging boughs, that a boat might have passed down the centre of the stream without seeing her.

At dawn the next morning a busy scene was going on on board and round the slaver. Her crew, aided by a number of negroes, were employed in setting up her rigging and fitting slave-decks, while several canoes were assisting her boats in bringing water and provisions alongside. Thus they were employed without cessation for two days; there was no play, it was all hard, earnest work. It is a pity they were not labouring in a good cause instead of a bad one.

In the meantime the King of ————, as he was called, in reality the principal slave-dealer and greatest rogue in the district, was collecting the negroes who had been kidnapped by him or his allies, from whom he had bought them in the neighbouring provinces—some as they were quietly fishing in their canoes on the coast, others as they were seated beneath the shade of the palm-tree in their native forest, or were coming from the far interior with a load of oil or ivory, to sell to the nearest trader—untutored savages who, perhaps, had never before seen the face of a white man or the blue dancing ocean. It is no wonder that they paint the devil white, and believe the sea is the passage to his realms. Eight hundred human beings were thus collected to be conveyed in that fell bark to the Far West, there to wear out their lives in hopeless slavery.

The greater part of the fourth day was spent in receiving half the number on board and stowing them below. This operation was performed by men whose especial trade it is. The unhappy wretches are compelled to sit down with their legs bent under them, so closely packed that they cover but little more space than the length of their feet, between decks, little more than a yard high, and thus they remain, bolted down to the decks, the whole voyage, a few only being

allowed to come up at a time to be aired, while the smallest quantity of water possible is afforded them to quench their burning thirst.

THE CAPTURE.

The work for the day was nearly concluded, and the captain of the slaver was walking by himself beneath the awning spread over the after part of the deck, when he observed a canoe suddenly dart out of the main stream into the bay where the schooner lay concealed. It was soon alongside, when a black jumped on board.

"Señor capitan, you must be pronto," he said. "Big man-of-war come, big canoe, mucho hombres come up river."

"Ah, have they found me out?" muttered the captain to himself. "I'll give them a warm reception if they do come. Very well, Queebo," he said aloud, "now pull back and watch them narrowly. Take care they don't see you, and come and report their movements to me."

At a signal all the crew were summoned on board, the awning was handed, boarding-nettings were triced up, the guns were double-shotted and run out, and a thick screen of boughs was carried across the part of the bay so as still further to conceal the schooner from

the eye of any stranger. Two guns were also sent on shore and planted in battery, so as to command the entrance of the bay. Every other precaution was likewise taken to avoid discovery; all fires were extinguished, and the blacks were ordered to remove from the neighbourhood.

By the time these arrangements had been made, the scout returned to give notice that two boats had entered the river, and were exploring one of the numerous passages of the stream. The captain on this ordered the scout to remain on board, lest he might betray their whereabouts to the enemy. He had no wish to destroy the boats, as so doing would not benefit him: concealment, not fighting, was his object. When night, however, came on, he sent out the scout to gain further intelligence. Scarcely had the man gone, when he returned, and noiselessly stepped on deck.

"Hist, señor, hist!" he whispered; "they are close at hand, little dreaming we are near them."

"Whereabouts?" inquired the captain.

"On the other side of the long island which divides the middle from the southern stream," was the substance of the reply.

"We'll attack them, then, and either kill or make them all prisoners. They may be useful as hostages,"

muttered the captain, and calling Antonio to him, he ordered him to man two boats with the most trustworthy of their people, and carefully to muffle the oars. This done, both boats left the schooner, under his command, in the direction indicated by the scout.

They pulled across the channel to a thickly-wooded island indicated by the scout. The negro landed, and in a few minutes came back.

"Dere dey are, señor," he whispered; "you may kill all fast asleep; bery good time now; no make noise."

On hearing this, the slavers, all of whom were armed to the teeth, advanced cautiously across the island, by a path with which Queebo seemed well acquainted. The black pointed between the trees, and there was seen the head of a man, fast asleep in the stern-sheets of a boat. Just then a light rustling noise was heard, and a figure was seen advancing close up to where the slavers were crouching down, ready for the command of their officer to fire.

He advanced slowly, looking out for the very path apparently by which they had gained the spot. He reached within almost an arm's length of the captain. The impulse was irresistible; and before the stranger was aware any one was near him, he was felled to the ground, and a handkerchief was passed over his mouth,

so that he could not utter a cry for help. Two other men, who were doing duty as sentinels on shore, were in like manner surprised and gagged, without uttering a sound to alarm the rest. The slavers then advanced close up to the nearest boat, and pouring a volley from their deadly trabucos into her, killed or wounded nearly all her crew. A larger boat was moored at some little distance further on, and her people being aroused by the firing, they at once shoved off into the stream, which the survivors of the other also succeeded in doing. They then opened a fire on the slavers, but, sheltered as they were among the trees, it was ineffectual.

The contest was kept up for some time; but reduced in strength as the crews of the boats were, they were at last obliged to retreat, while the slavers returned with their prisoners to the schooner. As the slaver's boats were left on the other side of the island, which extended for more than ā mile towards the sea, they were unable to follow their retreating enemy had they been so inclined; but in fact they did not relish the thought of coming in actual contact with British seamen, as they had good reason in believing the enemy to be, although weakened and dispirited by defeat.

When the prisoners, who had not uttered a word, were handed up on deck, the captain ordered lights

to be brought, for he had no longer any fear of being discovered. One evidently, by his uniform, was an officer; the other two were seamen. The captain paced the deck in the interval before lights were brought, grinding his teeth and clenching his fists with rage, as he muttered to himself,

"He shall die—he wears that hated uniform: it reminds me of what I once was. Oh, this hell within me! blood must quench its fire."

A seaman now brought aft a lantern; its glare fell as well on the features of the prisoner as on that of the slave captain. Both started.

"Staunton!" ejaculated the latter.

"Daggerfeldt!" exclaimed the prisoner.

"You know me, then?" said the captain of the slaver, bitterly; "it will avail you little though. I had wished it had been another man; but no matter —you must take your chance."

The slaver's crew were now thronging aft.

"Well, meos amigos," he continued, in a fierce tone, "what is to be done with these spies? You are the judges, and must decide the case."

"Enforca-los—hang them, hang them—at least the officer. The other two may possibly enter, and they may be of service: we want good seamen to work the vessel, and these English generally are so."

"You hear what your fate is to be," said Daggerfeldt, turning to Captain Staunton. "You had better prepare for it. You may have some at home to regret your loss. If you have any messages, I will take care to transmit them. It is the only favour I can do you."

While he spoke, a bitter sneer curled his lip, and his voice assumed a taunting tone, which he could not repress.

The gallant officer, proud in his consciousness of virtue, confronted the villain boldly.

"I would receive no favour, even my life, from one whose very name is a disgrace to humanity. Even if the message I were to send was conveyed correctly, it would be polluted by the bearer. It would be little satisfaction for my friends to know that I was murdered in an African creek by the hands of a rascally slaver."

While Staunton was uttering these words, which he did in very bitterness of spirit, for, knowing the character of the wretch with whom he had to deal, he had not the remotest hope of saving either his own life or that of his people, the rage of Daggerfeldt was rising till it surpassed his control.

"Silence!" he thundered, "or I will brain you on the spot!"

But Staunton stood unmoved.

"Madman, would you thus repay me for the life I saved?" he asked, calmly.

"A curse on you for having saved it," answered the pirate, fiercely, returning his sword, which he had half drawn, from its scabbard. "My hand, however, shall not do the deed. Here, Antonio, Diogo; here are the spies who wish to interfere in our trade, and would send us all to prison, or to the gallows, if they could catch us."

"The end of a rope and a dance on nothing for the officer, say I," answered the mulatto mate. "See what his followers will do; speak to them in their own lingo, captain, and ask them whether they choose to walk overboard or join us."

While he was speaking, some of the crew brought aft the two British seamen, with their hands lashed behind them. Others, headed by Antonio, immediately seized Captain Staunton, and led him to the gangway, one of the men running aloft to reeve a rope through the studden-sail-sheet-block on the main-yard. Staunton well knew what the preparations meant, but he trembled not; his whole anxiety was for the boats' crews he had led in the expedition which had ended so unfortunately, and for the two poor fellows, whose lives he feared were about also to be sacrificed by the miscreants.

The British seamen watched what was going forward, and by the convulsive workings of their features, and the exertions they were making to free their arms, were evidently longing to strike a blow to rescue him. Daggerfeldt was better able to confront them than he had been to face Staunton.

"You are seamen belonging to a man-of-war outside this river, and you came here to interfere with our affairs?"

"You've hit it to an affigraphy, my bo'," answered one of the men, glad, at all events, to get the use of his tongue. "We belongs to her Majesty's brig 'Sylph,' and we came into this here cursed hole to take you or any other slaver we could fall in with; and now you knows what I am, I'll just tell you what you are,—a runaway scoundrel of a piccarooning villain, whom no honest man would consort with, or even speak to, for that matter, except to give him a bit of his mind; and if you're not drowned, or blown up sky high, you'll be hung, as you deserve, as sure as you're as big a rascal as ever breathed. Now, put that in your pipe, my bo', and smoke it."

While he was thus running on, to the evident satisfaction of his shipmate, who, indifferent to their danger, seemed mightily to enjoy the joke. Daggerfeldt in vain endeavoured to stop him.

"Silence!" he shouted, "or you go overboard this moment!"

"You must bawl louder than that, my bo', if you wants to frighten Jack Hopkins, let me tell you," answered the undaunted seaman. "What is it you want of us? Come, out with it; some villany, I'll warrant."

The captain of the slaver ground his teeth with fury, but he dared not kill the man who was bearding him, for he could not explain to his crew the nature of the offence, a very venial one in their eyes, and he wanted some good seamen.

"I overlook your insolence," he answered, restraining his passion. "My crew are your judges. You have been convicted of endeavouring to capture us, and they give you your choice of joining us, or of going overboard; the dark stream alongside swarms with alligators. That fate is too good for your captain, he is to be hung."

"Why, what a cursed idiot you must be to suppose we'd ship with such a pretty set of scoundrels as you and your men are," answered Jack Hopkins, with a laugh. "I speak for myself and for Bob Short, too. It's all right, Bob, I suppose?" he said, turning to his companion. "There's no use shilly-shallying with these blackguards."

"Ay, ay; I'm ready for what you are," replied Bob Short, who had gained his name from the succinctness of his observations apparently, rather than from his stature, for he was six feet high, while the name by which Jack Hopkins was generally known on board was Peter Palaver, from his inveterate habits of loquacity.

"Well, then, look ye here, Mr. Daggerfeldt, I knowed you many years ago for an ill-begotten spawn of you knows what, and I knows you now for the biggest scoundrel unhung, so you must just take the compliments I've got to give you. Now for the matter of dying, I'd rather die with a brave noble fellow like our skipper than live in company with a man who has murdered his messmate, has seduced the girl who sheltered him from justice, and would now hang the man who saved hi life. Your favours! I'll have none on 'em."

The fierce pirate and slaver stood abashed before the wild outbreak of the bold sailor, but quickly recovering himself, livid and trembling with rage, he shouted out to his crew,—

"Heave these fools of Englishmen overboard. They know more of our secrets than they ought, and will not join us; send this talking fellow first."

"If it comes to that, I can find my tongue too, let

me tell you," exclaimed Bob Short: "you're a murderous, rascally, thieving—"

"Heave them both together," shouted Daggerfeldt.

"Stay," said Antonio, who was refined in his cruelty; "let them have the pleasure of seeing their captain hang first, since they are so fond of him. He well knows what their fate will be, and perhaps he would rather they went overboard than joined us."

"Do as you like, but let it be done quickly," answered Daggerfeldt. "I'm sick of this work, and we must be preparing to get out of the river, or their friends will be sending in here to look for us."

Hopkins and Short did not understand a word of this conversation, and finding themselves brought close up to where their captain stood engaged in his devotions, and preparing like a brave man for inevitable death, they believed that they were to share his fate.

"Well, I'm blowed if that aint more than I expected of the beggars," whispered Jack Hopkins to his companion; "they're going to do the thing that's right, after all, and launch us in our last cruise in the same way as the captain."

"Jack, can you pray?" asked Bob Short.

"Why, for the matter of that I was never much of a hand at it," answered Jack; "but when I was a

youngster I was taught to thank God for all his mercies, and I do so still. Why do you ask?"

"I was thinking as how as the skipper is taking a spell at it, whether we might ask him just to put in a word for us. He knows more about it; and a captain of a man-of-war must have a greater chance of being attended to than one of us, you see, Jack."

Poor Bob could never thus have exerted himself had he not felt that he should only have a few words more to speak in this life. Jack looked at him in surprise.

"I'll ask him, Bob, I'll ask him; but you know as how the parson says, in the country we are going to all men are equal, and so I suppose we ought to pray for ourselves."

"But we are still in this world, Jack," argued the other; "Captain Staunton is still our captain, and we are before the mast."

He spoke loud, and Captain Staunton had apparently overheard the conversation, for he smiled and looked towards them. He had been offering up a prayer to the throne on high for mercy for the failings of the two honest fellows whose ignorance it was now too late to enlighten. Antonio was a pious Catholic, and, villain as he was, he was unwilling not to give the chance of a quiet passage into the other world to his victims.

"What are you about there?" shouted Daggerfeldt; "is this work never to end?"

"The men are praying, señor, before they slip their cables for eternity," answered Antonio.

"Is there an eternity?" muttered the pirate, and shuddered.

On Captain Staunton's turning his head, on which the light from the lantern fell strongly, Antonio believed that it was the signal that he was prepared, —"Hoist away!" he shouted, in Spanish; but at that instant a light female form rushed forth from the cabin, and, seizing the whip, held it forcibly down with one hand while she disengaged the noose from the captain's neck.

"Oh Juan! have you not murders enough on your head already that you must commit another in cold blood?" she exclaimed, turning to Daggerfeldt, "and that other on one who saved your life at the risk of his own. I knew him—before all my misery began, and recognised him at once. If you persist, I leave you; you know me well, I fear not to die; Antonio, you dare not disobey me. Unreeve that rope, and leave me to settle with our captain regarding these men."

The slaver's crew stood sulky and with frowning aspect around her, yet they in no way interrupted her

proceedings, while Daggerfeldt stood a silent spectator in the after-part of the vessel.

"Unreeve that rope, again I say," she exclaimed, stamping on the deck with her foot. The order was obeyed without the captain's interference. "Your lives are safe for the present," she said, addressing the Englishmen. "I know that man's humour, and he dares not now contradict me. I am the only thing who yet clings to him, the only one he thinks who loves him, the only being in whom he can placé his trust; that explains my power." She spoke hurriedly and low, so that Staunton alone could hear her, and there was scorn in her tone. "Cast those men loose," she continued, turning to the crew, while with her own hands she undid the cords which lashed Staunton's arms, and as she did so she whispered, "Keep together, and edge towards the arms-chest. There are those on board who will aid me if any attempt is made to injure you."

Saying this she approached the captain of the slaver; she touched his arm: "Juan," she said, in a softened tone, totally different from that in which she had hitherto spoken; "I am wayward, and have my fancies. I felt certain that your death would immediately follow that of those men. I was asleep in my cabin, and dreamed that you were struggling in

the waves, and, they seizing hold of you, were about to drag you down with them."

Daggerfeldt looked down at her as she stood in a supplicating attitude before him. "You are fanciful, Juanetta; but you love me, girl?"

"Have I not proved it?" she answered, in a tone of sadness: "you will save the lives of these men?"

"I tell you I will. We will carry them in chains to Cuba, and there sell them as slaves."

"You must let them go free here," she answered.

"Impossible, Juanetta; do you wish to betray me?" he asked, fiercely. "Go to your cabin. The men shall not be hurt, and they will be better off than the blacks on board."

She was silent, and then retired to her cabin, speaking on her way a word to a negro who stood near the entrance. "Mauro," she said, "watch those men, and if you observe any signs of treachery, let me know."

The black signified that he comprehended her wishes, and would obey them.

THE ESCAPE.

Captain Staunton and his companions were not allowed to remain long at liberty; for, as soon as the lady had retired, at a sign from Daggerfeldt, the

slaver's crew again attempted to lash their arms behind them, not, however, without some resistance on the part of Hopkins and Short. The most zealous in this work was the negro Mauro, who contrived, as he was passing a rope round Captain Staunton's arm, to whisper in his ear, "Make no resistance, señor, it is useless. You have friends near you. Tell your followers to keep quiet. They can do themselves no good."

Staunton accordingly told his men to follow his example, when they quietly submitted to their fate. Before this, he had contemplated the possibility of their being able to succeed in getting arms from the arms-chest, and either selling their lives dearly, or jumping overboard and attempting to reach the shore. In most slavers the lower deck is devoted entirely to the slaves and the provisions, the men sleeping under a a topgallant-forecastle, or sometimes on the open deck, and the captain and mates under the poop-deck. There was, therefore, no spare place in which to confine the prisoners, and they were accordingly told to take up their quarters under an awning stretched between two guns in the waist. This was better accommodation than they could have expected, for not only were they sheltered partially from the dew, but were screened from the observation of the crew, and

were not subject to the suffocating heat of the between-decks.

A night may, however, be more agreeably spent than on a hard plank, up an African river, with a prospect of being sent to feed the alligators in the morning, and the certainty of a long separation from one's friends and country, not to speak of the nine hundred and ninety-nine chances out of a thousand of one's losing one's health, if not one's life, by the insatiable yellow-fever.

The reflections of Captain Staunton were most bitter. He thought not of himself, but of her he had loved so long and faithfully: she would believe him dead, and he knew how poignant would be her grief. He felt sure that she would not be faithless to his memory, but months, even years, might pass before he might escape or have the means of informing her of his existence. While these ideas were passing through his mind, it was impossible to sleep. There were, too, the midnight noises of the African clime: the croaking of frogs, the chirrup of birds, the howl of wild beasts, the cries, if not of fish, of innumerable amphibious animals of flesh and fowl, and, more than all, the groans and moans of the unhappy beings confined in their noisome sepulchre below; all combined to make a concert sounding as might

the distant echoes of Pandemonium. At length, however, towards the morning, nature gave way, and he forgot himself and his misfortunes in slumber. It had not lasted many minutes when he was aroused by a hand placed on his shoulder, while a soft hush was whispered in his ear. At the same time he felt that there was a knife employed in cutting the ropes which bound his arms. Something told him that the person performing this office was a friend, so he did not attempt to speak, but quietly waited to learn what he was next expected to do. Again the voice whispered in his ear—

"Arouse your companions, if possible, but beware that they do not speak aloud; caution them in their ear as I did you—their heads are near where yours lay."

The voice which spoke, from its soft silvery tones, Staunton felt certain was that of a female, as was the hand which loosened his bonds. Without hesitation, therefore, he did as he was desired, and putting his mouth down to Hopkins's ear, he ordered him on his life not to utter a word. Jack was awake in a moment, and alive to the state of affairs. They had more difficulty in arousing Bob Short, who uttered several very treacherous groans and grunts before he was quite awake, though he fortunately did not speak. Had Captain Staunton been aware that a sentry was actually

posted outside the screen he would have trembled for their safety. Fortunately the man was fast asleep reclining against the bulwarks—a fact ascertained by Jack Hopkins, who poked his head from under the screen to ascertain how the coast lay. Not a souud was heard to give notice that any of the crew were stirring on deck. Staunton, feeling that his best course was to trust implicitly to his unseen guide, waited till he received directions how to proceed. He soon felt himself pulled gently by the arm towards the nearest port, which was sufficiently raised to enable him to pass through it. On putting his head out he perceived through the obscurity a canoe with a single person in it, hanging on alongside the schooner. His guide dropped noiselessly into it and took her place in the stern; Staunton cautiously followed, and seating himself in the after-thwart, found a paddle put into his hands; Jack and Bob required no one to tell them what to do, but quickly also took their places in the boat. As soon as they were seated, the man who was first in the canoe shoved her off gently from the side of the schooner, and while the guide directed their course, began to paddle off rapidly towards the centre of the stream. So dexterously did he ply his oar that not a splash was heard, though the canoe darted quickly along through the ink-like current without

leaving even a ripple in her wake. Not a word was uttered by any of the party: every one seemed to be aware of the importance of silence, and even Peter Palaver forbore to cut a joke, which he felt very much inclined to do, as he found himself increasing his distance from the black slaver.

THE PURSUIT.

The canoe held her silent course down the dark and mirror-like stream towards the sea. Not a breath of wind moved the leaves of the lofty palm-trees which towered above their heads, casting their tall shadows on the calm waters below, while here and there a star was seen piercing, as it were, through the thick canopy of branches; the air was hot and oppressive, and a noxious exhalation rose from the muddy banks, whence the tide had run off. Now and then a lazy alligator would run his long snout above the surface of the stream like some water demon, and again glide noiselessly back into his slimy couch.

"Tell your people to take to their paddles and ply them well," said the guide, in a louder tone than had hitherto been used.

Staunton was now certain that it was Juanetta's voice,—that of the lady who had preserved his life.

"We are still some distance from the sea, in reach-

ing which is our only chance of safety, for if we are overtaken—and the moment our flight is discovered we shall be pursued—our death is certain.

The instant Bob and Jack had leave to use their paddles they plied them most vigorously, and the canoe, which had hitherto glided, now sprang, as it were, through the water, throwing up sparkling bubbles on either side of her sharp bows.

"Pull on, my brave men," she exclaimed to herself, more than to the seamen, "everything depends on our speed. The tide is still making out, and if we can clear the mouth of the river before the flood sets in all will be well."

She spoke in Spanish, a language Staunton understood well. Her eye was meantime turning in every direction as her hand skilfully guided the boat.

"There are scouts about who might attempt to stop us if they suspected we were fugitives. I have, however, the pass-word, and can, without difficulty, mislead them if we encounter any. Your own people, too, may be in the river looking out for the schooner."

"I think not," answered Staunton; "we had lost one of our boats, and as I am believed dead, my successor (poor fellow, how he will be disappointed!) will, if he acts wisely, not attempt to capture the 'Espanto' except with the 'Sylph' herself."

"The greater necessity, then, for our getting out to sea. It is already dawn. Observe the red glare bursting through the mist in the eastern sky, just through the vista of palm trees up that long reach. We shall soon have no longer the friendly darkness to conceal us."

As she was speaking a large canoe was seen gliding calmly up the stream, close in with the bank. The people in her hailed in the negro language, and the man who was first in the canoe promptly answered in the same.

"Ask them if they have seen the English man-of-war," said Juanetta.

The negroes answered that she was still riding at anchor off the mouth of the river.

"We shall thus be safe if we can reach the open sea," she observed; "but we have still some miles to row before we can get clear of the treacherous woods which surround us; and perhaps when our flight is discovered our pursuers may take one of the other channels, and we may find our egress stopped at the very mouth of the stream. This suspense is dreadful."

"We may yet strike a blow for you, and for our own liberty, señora," answered Staunton. "It was fortunate the obscurity prevented the people in the canoe from discovering us."

"That matters little. No one would venture to stop me but that man, that demon rather, in human disguise, Daggerfeldt, as you call him," she replied, bitterly, pronouncing the name as one to which she was unaccustomed. "Ah, señor; love—ardent, blind, mad love—can be turned to the most deadly hatred. Criminal, lost as I have been, I feel that there is a step further into iniquity, and that step I have refused to take. The scales have fallen from my eyes, and I have seen the enormity of my wickedness, and have discovered the foulness of my wrongs. From his own lips the dreadful information came. In the same breath he acknowledged that he had murdered my father, and deceived me. As he slept he told the dreadful tale; the sight of you conjured up the past to his memory; other murders he talked of, and treachery of all sorts attempted. He mocked, too, at me, and at my credulity; I learned also that he still contemplated your destruction as well as mine. I who had preserved his life, who had sacrificed my happiness here and hereafter for his sake, was to be cast off for another lady fairer and younger, so it seemed to me, but I could not understand all his words, for sometimes he spoke in his native language, sometimes in Spanish. Enough was heard to decide me. I had long contemplated quitting him. I knew that it was

wrong remaining, but had not strength before to tear asunder my bonds, till the feeling that I might rescue you, and make some slight reparation to heaven for my wickedness, gave me strength to undertake the enterprise. There, señor, you now know the reason of your liberation; my trusty Mauro, who has ever been faithful, provided the means."

She spoke in a hurried tone, and her sentences were broken, as if she hesitated to speak of her disgrace and misery, but yet was urged on by an irresistible impulse. Even while she was speaking her eye was on the alert, and her hand continued skilfully to guide the canoe. The stars had gradually disappeared, sinking as it were into a bed of thick leaden-coloured mist, which overspread the narrow arch overhead, while in the east a red glow appeared which melted away as the pale daylight slowly filled the air. It was day, but there was no joyousness in animated nature, or elasticity in the atmosphere as at that time in other regions. A sombre hue tinted the trees, the water, and the sky, even the chattering of innumerable parrots, and the cries of those caricatures of men, many thousands of obscene monkeys, appeared rather to mock at than to welcome the return of the world to life.

The canoe flew rapidly on. Suddenly Juanetta

lifted her paddle from the water. Her ears were keenly employed.

"Hark!" she said, "cease rowing; there is the sound of oars in the water. Ah! It is as I thought. There is a boat endeavouring to cut us off by taking another channel; she is still astern of us though, but we must not slack our exertions."

Captain Staunton redoubled his efforts, as did his men on his telling them they were pursued. After the story he had heard, he was now doubly anxious to rescue the unfortunate girl from the power of the miscreant Daggerfeldt. They now entered a broader reach of the river below the fork, where the channel which Juanetta supposed their pursuers had taken united with the one they were following. They had got some way down it when Staunton observed a large boat emerging from behind the woody screen. Juanetta judged from his eye that he had caught sight of the boat.

"Is it as I thought?" she asked, calmly.

Staunton told her that he could distinguish a boat, evidently pursuing them, but whether she belonged to his ship or to the slaver he could not judge.

"We must not stay to examine; if we were mistaken we should be lost," she observed; "but we have the means of defending ourselves—see, I had

fire-arms placed in the bottom of the canoe, and here are powder-horns under the seat. Mauro has carefully loaded them, and if they attempt to stop us we must use them."

On they pulled, straining every nerve to the utmost, but the canoe was heavily laden, and the boat gained on them. Staunton trusted that their pursuers might be his own people, but his hope vanished when one of them rose; there was a wreath of smoke, a sharp report, and a bullet flew over their heads and splintered the branch of a tree which grew at the end of a point they were just then doubling.

"Aim lower next time, my bo', if you wish to wing us," shouted Jack Hopkins, who saw no use in longer keeping silence.

"Ah!" exclaimed Juanetta, "the blue sea—we may yet escape."

As she spoke, another shot better aimed took effect on the quarter of the canoe, but did no further injury. It showed, however, that there were good marksmen in the boat intent on mischief, and that they were perilously near already. For some time they were again shut out from their pursuers, but as the latter doubled the last point, they had, too evidently, gained on them.

"If any one again rises to fire, you must take also to

your arms, señor," said Juanetta, a shudder passing through her frame; "and if it is he, kill him—kill him without remorse. He has shown none. That rifle at your feet was his—it was always true to its aim."

She had scarcely ceased speaking, when a figure stood up in the boat. It seemed to have the likeness of Daggerfeldt. Staunton seized the rifle to fire—he was too late. Ere he had drawn the trigger a flash was seen, and Juanetta with a wild shriek, fell forward into the canoe. Staunton fired; the man who had sent the fatal shot stood unharmed, but the oar of one fell from his grasp, and got entangled with those of the others. This would have enabled the canoe to recover her lost ground, had not Mauro, on seeing his beloved mistress fall, thrown up his paddle, exclaiming that he wished to die with her.

"She may yet be saved if you exert yourself," cried Staunton, in Spanish; "row—for your life row; I will attend to your mistress."

Urged by the officer's commanding tone, the negro again resumed his paddle. Staunton, still guiding the canoe, raised Juanetta, and placed her back in the stern sheets—she scarcely breathed. The ball had apparently entered her neck, though no blood was to be seen. He suspected the worst, but dared

not utter his fears lest Mauro should again give way to his grief. Several other shots were fired at them from the boat, which was rapidly gaining on them. They were close on the bar, in another moment they would be in clear water.

The slaver crew shouted fiercely; again a volley was fired, the balls from which went through and through the sides of the slight canoe, without wounding any one, but making holes for the water to rush in. One more volley would sink them, when a loud cheerful shout rung in their ears, and two boats with the British ensign trailing from the stern were seen pulling rapidly towards them.

Jack Hopkins and Bob Short answered the hail; the pirates, too, saw the boats, they ceased rowing, and then pulling round, retraced their course up the river. The canoe with the rapid current flew over the bar, and had barely time to get alongside the barge of the 'Sylph' when she was full up to the thwarts. We need not say that his crew welcomed Captain Staunton's return in safety with shouts of joy after they had believed him dead.

With the strong current then setting out of the river it was found hopeless to follow the slaver's boat. They were soon alongside the brig.

Poor Juanetta was carried carefully to the cap-

tain's cabin, watched earnestly by Mauro. The surgeon examined her wound.

"Her hours are numbered," he said. "No art of mine can save her."

THE ACTION.

Calm and treacherously beautiful as was the morning on which Captain Staunton regained his ship, scarcely had she got under weigh to stand in closer to the mouth of the river in order to watch more narrowly for the schooner should she attempt to run out, than a dark cloud was seen rising over the land. It appeared on a sudden and extended rapidly, till it spread over the whole eastern sky.

"I fear that it will not do with the weather we have in prospect to send the boats up the river again to retrieve our defeat, Mr. Collins," said Captain Staunton, pointing to the threatening sky.

"I think not, sir, with you," answered the lieutenant; "in fact, if I may advise, the sooner we shorten sail the better, or we may have it down upon us before we are prepared."

"You are right, Mr. Collins; shorten sail as soon as you please," said the captain.

"All hands shorten sail," was sung along the decks.

"Aloft there"—"Lay out"—"Be smart about it"

—"In with everything"—"Let fly"—"Haul down"—"Brail up"—"Be smart, it will be down upon us thick and strong, in a moment"—"Up with the helm"—"Look out there aloft"—"Be smart, my lads."

Such were the different orders issued, and exclamations uttered in succession by the officers.

A moment before the sea was smooth as glass, and the brig had scarcely steerage-way. Now the loud roaring of the angry blast was heard; and the flapping of the yet unfolded canvas against the masts; the ocean was a sheet of white foam, and the sky a canopy of inky hue. Away the brig flew before it, leaving the land astern, her sails were closely furled, and she remained unharmed, not a spar was sprung, not a rope carried away, not a sail injured. Thus she flew on under bare poles till the squall subsided as quickly as it had arisen, and sail was again made to recover the ground they had lost.

Land was still visible, blue and indistinct, but many fears were naturally entertained lest the slaver, which had already given them so much trouble, should have got out of the river with her living cargo, and by keeping either way along shore, have escaped them. For some minutes the wind entirely failed, and curses loud and deep were uttered at their ill luck, when, as

if to rebuke them for their discontent, the fine fresh sea-breeze set in and with a flowing sheet carried them gaily along.

Every eye was employed in looking out for the slaver, for they could not suppose she would have lost the opportunity of getting out during their absence. They were not kept long in suspense.

"A sail on the starboard bow," cried the look-out from the mast-head.

"What is she like?" asked the first-lieutenant.

"A schooner, sir. The slaver, sir, as we chased afore," answered the seaman, his anxiety that she should be so making him fancy he could not be mistaken.

"The fellow must have sharp eyes indeed to know her at this distance," muttered the lieutenant to himself, with a smile, "however, I suppose he's right. We must not though be chasing the wrong craft while the enemy is escaping. Which way is she standing?" he asked.

"To the southward, sir, with every stitch of canvas she can carry," was the answer.

The officer made the proper official report to the captain.

"We must be after her, at all events," said Captain Staunton. "Haul up, Mr. Collins, in chase. Send

Mr. Stephenson away in the barge to watch the mouth of the river."

The brig was forthwith brought to the wind, the barge in a very short space and manned with a stout crew, well armed and provisioned, and she shoved off to perform her duty while the 'Sylph' followed the strange sail. The man-of-war had evidently an advantage over the stranger, for while the sea-breeze in the offing blew fresh and steady, in shore it was light and variable.

On perceiving this, Captain Staunton kept his brig still nearer to the wind, and ran down, close hauled, along the coast, thus keeping the strength of the wind, and coming up hand over hand with the stranger, who lay at times almost becalmed under the land. The breeze, however, before they came abreast of her reached her also, and away she flew like a startled hare just aroused from sleep.

"Fire a gun to bring her to," exclaimed the captain; "she shall have no reason to mistake our intentions."

The British ensign was run up and a gun was discharged, but to no effect. Two others followed, which only caused her to make more sail, and by her luffing closer up to the wind, she apparently hoped to weather on them and cross their bows. She was a large

schooner, and by the way sail was made on her, probably strongly handed, so that there could be little doubt that she was the vessel for which they were in search.

"Send a shot into the fellow," exclaimed the captain; "that will prove we are in earnest, and make him show his colours."

The shot clearly hit the schooner, although the range was somewhat long, but it did slight damage; it had the effect though of making him show his ensign, and the stripes and stars of the United States streamed out to the breeze.

"Those are not the fellow's colours, I'll swear," said Mr. Collins, as he looked through his glass. "Another shot will teach him we are not to be humbugged."

"Give it him, Collins, and see if you can knock away any of his spars," said the captain: "we must follow that fellow round the world till we bring him to action, and take or sink him. He'll not heave-to for us, depend upon that."

"Not if Daggerfeldt is the captain," answered the first-lieutenant.

"I think she is his schooner; but he is so continually altering her appearance that it is difficult to be quite certain."

"Though I was some hours on board of her, as I reached her in the dark, and left her before it was light, I cannot be certain," observed Captain Staunton, as he took a turn on the quarter-deck with his officer. "By-the-by, there is that poor girl's black attendant—he will know the vessel at all events. Tell him to come up, and give us his opinion."

The lieutenant went into the captain's cabin, and soon after returned, observing,

"He will not quit his mistress, sir; and the surgeon tells me he has sat by her side without stirring, watching every movement of her lips as a mother does her only child. As no one on board can speak his language but you, sir, we cannot make him understand why he is wanted on deck."

"Oh, I forgot that; I will speak to him myself," answered the captain. "Keep firing at the chase till she heaves-to, and then see that she does not play us any trick. Daggerfeldt is up to everything."

Captain Staunton descended to his cabin. Juanetta lay on the sofa, a sheet thrown over her limbs, her countenance of a corpse-like hue, but by the slight movements of her lips she still breathed. The black hung over her, applying a handkerchief to her brow to wipe away the cold damps gathering there. Her features, though slightly sunk as seen in the subdued

light of the cabin, seemed like those of some beautiful statue rather than of a living being. The surgeon stood at the head of the couch endeavouring to stop the hæmorrhage from the wound.

"I dare not probe for the ball," he whispered, as if the dying girl could understand him; "it would only add to her torture, and I cannot prolong her life."

"And this is thy handywork, Daggerfeldt—another victim of thy unholy passions," muttered the captain, as he gazed at her for a moment; "poor girl, we will avenge thee!"

He had considerable difficulty in persuading Mauro to quit his mistress, but at length the faithful black allowed himself to be led on deck. He looked round, at first bewildered, as if unconscious where he was, but when his eye fell on the schooner it brightened up, as if meeting an object with which it was familiar, and a fierce expression took possession of his countenance.

"*Es ella, es ella, señor!*" he exclaimed, vehemently. "It is she, it is she—fire, fire—kill him, kill him, he has slain my mistress!"

A gun was just then discharged, the shot struck the quarter of the schooner, and the white splinters were seen flying from it. On seeing this he shouted with savage joy, clapped his hands, and spat in the direction of the slaver, exhibiting every other sign he could

think of, of hatred and rage. Having thus given way to his feelings, the recollection of his mistress returned, and with a groan of anguish he rushed down below.

The two vessels had been gradually drawing closer to each other, in consequence of the schooner luffing up to endeavour to cross the bows of the brig, and if she could, to get to windward of her, the only chance she had of escaping. The eyes of the officers were fixed on her to watch her movements.

"She's about—all right!" shouted the captain: "give her a broadside while she is in stays, and knock away some of her spars. Fire high, my lads, so as not to hurt her hull."

The brig discharged her whole larboard battery, and the fore-topmast of the schooner was seen tumbling below.

"By Jingo, we've dished him!" exclaimed Jack Hopkins, to his chum, Bob Short; "and I'm blowed, Bob, if it wasn't my shot did that ere for him. I never lost sight of it till it struck."

"May be," answered Bob; "hard to prove, though."

The schooner had sufficient way on her to bring her round before the topmast fell, and she was now brought into a position partially to rake the brig, though at

the distance the two vessels were from each other the aim was very uncertain.

That Daggerfeldt had determined to fight his vessel was now evident, for the flag of the United States being hauled down, that of Spain was run up in its stead, and at the same moment a broadside was let fly from the schooner. The shot came whizzing over and about the brig, but one only struck her, carrying away the side of a port, a splinter from which slightly wounded Bob Short in the leg.

"Ough!" exclaimed Bob, quietly binding his handkerchief round the limb without quitting his post, "they're uncivil blackguards."

"Never mind, Bob," said Jack Hopkins; "we'll soon have an opportunity of giving them something in return. See, by Jingo, we've shot away his forestay! we'll have his foremast down in a jiffy. Huzza, my boys, let's try what we can do!"

Whether Jack's gun was well aimed it is difficult to say, but at all events the shot from the brig told with considerable effect on the rigging of the schooner. The brig did not altogether escape from the fire of the enemy, who worked his guns rapidly, but whenever a brace was shot away it was quickly again rove, so that she was always kept well under command. The loss of her fore-topmast made the escape of the schooner

hopeless, unless she could equally cripple her pursuer; but that she had not contrived to do, and accordingly as the two vessels drew closer together, the fire from each took more effect. Daggerfeldt, to do him justice, did all a seaman could do, and in a very short space of time the wreck of his topmast was cleared away, and he was preparing to get up a new one in its place. The sea was perfectly smooth, and the wind gradually fell till there was scarcely enough to blow away the smoke from the guns of the combatants, which in thick curling wreaths surrounded them till at intervals only could the adjacent land and the ocean be seen.

Although Daggerfeldt could scarcely have hoped to succeed either in escaping or coming off the victor, he still refused to haul down his colours, even when the 'Sylph,' shooting past ahead of him, poured in her whole broadside, sweeping his decks and killing and wounding several of his people. Dreadful were the shrieks which arose from the poor affrighted wretches confined below, although none of them were injured. The 'Sylph' then wore round, and passing under her stern, gave her another broadside, and then luffing up, ran her alongside—the grappling-irons were hove on board, and she was secured in a deadly embrace. The miserable blacks, believing that every moment was to be their last, again uttered loud cries of horror; but

the slaver's crew, some of whom fought with halters round their necks, still refused to yield, and with cutlass in hand, seemed prepared to defend their vessel to the last as the British seamen, led on by their captain, leaped upon the decks. Staunton endeavoured to single out Daggerfeldt, but he could nowhere distinguish him; and after a severe struggle, in which several of the Spaniards were killed, he fought his way aft and hauled down the colours.

At that instant a female form, with a white robe thrown around her, was seen standing on the deck of the brig; the crew of the slaver also saw her, and believing her to be a spirit of another world, fancied she had come to warn them of their fate. The energies of many were paralyzed, and some threw down their arms and begged for quarter. A loud piercing shriek was heard.

"I am avenged, I am avenged!" she cried, and sank upon the deck.

It was Juanetta. Mauro, who had followed her from the cabin, threw himself by her side, and wrung his hands in despair. They raised up her head and the surgeon felt her pulse. She had ceased to breathe.

No further resistance was offered by the crew of the slaver. Eight hundred human beings—men, women, and children—were found stowed below, wedged

so closely together, that none could move without disturbing his neighbour. Some had actually died from sheer fright at the noise of the cannonading.

Instant search was made for Daggerfeldt; he was nowhere to be found, and the crew either could not or would not give any information respecting him. The prize was carried safely to Sierra Leone, where she was condemned; the slaves were liberated and became colonists; and Captain Staunton, and his officers and crew, got a handsome share of prize money.

The 'Sylph' was in the following month recalled home, and a few weeks afterward the papers announced the marriage of Captain Staunton, R.N., to Miss Blanche D'Aubigné.

CHAPTER XV.

CORUNNA.—OPORTO.—PULL UP THE DOURO.—NOTICE OF THE SIEGE OF OPORTO.—LINE-OF-BATTLE SHIP.

PORPOISE's story lasted out the gale. We were not sorry to see the conclusion of the latter, though it left old ocean in a very uncomfortable state for some time. A downright heavy gale is undoubtedly a very fine thing to witness—at least the effects are—and every man would wish to see one once in his life; but having experienced what it can do, and how it makes the ocean look and human beings feel, a wise man will be satisfied, at all events if he is to fall in with it in a small cutter in the Bay of Biscay when that once is over. I've had to go through a good many in the course of my nautical career; and though I've often heard sung with much gusto—

"One night it blew a hurricane,
The sea was mountains rolling,
When Barney Buntline turned his quid,
And cried to Billy Bowline:

"Here's a south-wester coming, Billy;
Don't you hear it roar now?
Lord help 'em, how I pities those
Unhappy folks ashore now!

"While you and I upon the deck
Are comfortably lying,
My eyes! what tiles and chimney tops
About their heads are flying!"

I mustn't quote more of the old song; for my own part I like a steady breeze, and a smooth sea, when plates and dishes will stay quietly on the table, and a person may walk the deck without any undue exertion of the muscles of the leg.

The gale had driven us somewhat into the bay, and finding it would cause us little delay to look into Corunna, we determined to go there. The entrance to the harbour is very easy—a fine tall lighthouse on the south clearly making it. We brought up off the town, which is situated along the circular shore of a bay something like Weymouth. After paying our respects to the consul, we mounted a troop of steeds offered us for hire, and galloped off to inspect the chief scenes of the engagement between the English and the French, when the former retreated under Sir John Moore. On our return we visited his tomb, situated on the ramparts on the sea side of the town; the tomb is surrounded with cannon, with their muzzles down-

ward—a fit monument to the hero who sleeps beneath. Carstairs did not fail to repeat with due effect—

'Not a sound was heard; not a funeral note.'

They are truly magnificent lines, rarely equalled. Some, however, of a like character appeared lately on Havelock, which are very much to my taste.

But where am I driving to with my poetry and criticism? We got on board the same night, and made sail by daybreak the next morning. We looked into the deep and picturesque Gulf of Vigo, and thought the town a very nasty one, in spite of its imposing castle on the top of a hill. Had we come from the south we might have formed a different opinion of the place. We hove-to off Oporto, and should have gone in, but though exempt from harbour-dues, we found that the pilotage would be heavy, and that we might have some difficulty in getting out again over the bar which has formed across the mouth of the Douro. The city stands on a granite hill on the north side of the river, and about three miles from the sea. Fortunately for us while we were hove-to there, the steamer from England came in sight, and we were able to obtain a passage on shore in the boats which brought off the mail bags. Hearty, Bubble, and I formed the party: Carstairs and Porpoise remained to take care of the ship.

Away we pulled with the glee of schoolboys on a holiday excursion; the boat was large, but of the roughest description—with the stem and stern alike—probably not changed since the earliest days of the Portuguese monarchy; she was double-banked, pulling twelve oars at least. The men mostly wore red caps with a coloured sash round their waists, and had shoeless feet: some had huge wooden slippers almost big enough to go to sea in. Many of them were fine-looking fellows, but they were very unlike English sailors, and oh! how they did jabber. To those who understood them their observations might have been very sensible, but to our ears their voices sounded like the chattering of a huge family of monkeys in their native woods. The view before us consisted of the blue shining sea, a large white-washed and yellow-washed village to the north, called St. João da Foz, with a lighthouse on a hill at one end of it, a line of black rocks and white breakers before us, and to the south a yellow beach with cliffs and pine-trees beyond, and a convent, and a few of the higher standing houses and churches of Oporto in the distance. When we got near the white foam-topped rollers, all the jabbering ceased, our crew bent to their oars like men worthy of descendants of Albuquerque's gallant crew; and the boat now backed for an instant, now dashing on, we

were in smooth water close under the walls of a no very formidable-looking fortress. A little further on we landed at a stone slip, at the before mentioned village, among fishwomen, and porters, and boatmen, and soldiers, and custom-house guards, and boys, all talking away most vociferously. As we had no luggage to carry, we were allowed to look about us. What we should have done I scarcely know, had not Bubble, who never failed to find acquaintance in every place, recognized an English gentleman who had come down to the river to embark for the city. Bubble's friend was invaluable to us; he first invited us to go up the river in his boat, and pointed out numerous spots of interest on the way. The boat was a curious affair: it had a flat bottom and sides, and narrowed to a rising point forward. The greater part was covered with a wooden awning painted green, and supported by wooden stanchions; the seats run fore and aft round the sides; it had yellow curtains to keep out the sun or rain; the crew, three in number, stood up with their faces to the bow, pressing against the oars; two stood on a deck forward, and one, who occasionally brought his oar in a line with the keel, rowed aft. Dressed in red caps with red sashes, and mostly in white or blue-striped garments, they had a picturesque appearance.

Although the civil war which overthrew despotism, and planted the present line on the throne, had occurred so long before, our new friend spoke of it with as much interest as if it had but lately been concluded. Such an occurrence, indeed, was the great event in the lives of a generation.

On the south side of the entrance of the river is a long sandbank: on the north side is the castle of Foz, or the mouth. This castle was built by the Pedroites, and it was literally the key on which depended the success of the enterprise. Had it been taken, the communication with the sea and Oporto would have been cut off, and the Liberals would have been starved out. For the greater portion of the time occupied by the struggle, Don Pedro's followers held little more than the city of Oporto and a line of country on the north bank of the Douro scarcely a mile wide, leading from the city to the sea. They held the lighthouse at the north point of the village; but a few hundred yards beyond was a mound on which the Miguelites erected a strong battery. Not a spot along the whole line but what was the scene of some desperate encounter; and most certainly the Portuguese Constitutionalists of all ranks, from the highest to the lowest, fought as bravely as men could fight in the noblest of causes. Heaven favoured the right,

and in spite of apparently overwhelming hosts opposed to them, of disease and gaunt famine, they won their cause, and the mother of the present enlightened King of Portugal ascended the throne. But I am writing the cruise of the 'Frolic,' and not a history of Portugal. Still I must dot down a few of our friend's anecdotes. While the north side of the river was held by the Constitutionalists, the south was in the hands of the Miguelites, and the two parties used to amuse themselves by firing at each other across the stream, so that it was dangerous to pass along the lower road by daylight.

On one occasion the Miguelites wishing to attack the castle, brought a number of casks to the end of the spit of sand at the entrance of the river, and erected a battery on it; but they forgot to fill the casks with sand or earth; when morning broke there was a formidable battery directly under the walls of the castle. Some unfortunate troops were placed in it to work the guns; all went very well till the guns of the castle began to play on it, and then a few shot sent the entire fabric to the four winds of heaven, and either killed the soldiers placed in it or drove them flying hurry-skurry across the sand, where many more were picked off by the rifles of the Constitutionalists.

What could be more unpleasant than having on a

hot day to run along a heavy shingly beach, with a number of sharpshooters taking deliberate aim at one's corpus. Happy would he be who could find a deep hole into which to roll himself out of harm's way.

The banks of the Douro are picturesque from the very entrance. On either side are broken cliffs; on the south covered with pine groves, on the north with yellow, white, and pink houses and churches, and orange groves. On the south we passed the remains of the old convent of St. Antonio, where once the jovial monks feasted and sang and prayed, well supplied with the spoils of the sea. Here pious fishermen used to stop and ask a blessing on their labours, on their way down the river, and on their return they failed not to offer the choice of their spoil to the worthy friars. The gardens of the convent were profusely ornamented with statues of curious device, and flowers, and vases, and orange-trees, and grottoes, and temples; all now swept away by the scythe of war—the convent walls, now forming part of a manufactory. The monks have disappeared from Portugal, and few people regret them less than the Portuguese. At best they were drones; and, if we are to credit one quarter of the tales told of them, they continued to do no little amount of evil in their generation. On the same side of the river, but much higher up, where the Douro

forces its way between two lofty cliffs, on the summit of the southern one, stands the once very celebrated convent of the Sierra. From beneath its walls the Duke of Wellington led his army across the river into Oporto, and drove Marshal Soult out of the city. This convent, and its surrounding garden, was the only spot held by the Pedroites, and most heroically held it was, against the whole army of the usurper Miguel, led by his best generals. Day after day, and night after night, were his legions led to the attack, and as often were they repulsed by the half-starved defenders of its earth-formed ramparts. We may speak with pride of the siege of Kars and of Lucknow, and of many another event in the late war; but I hold that they do not eclipse the gallant defence by the Portuguese Constitutionalists of the Sierra convent. Below the convent the two banks of the river are now joined by a handsome iron suspension bridge, which superseded one long existing, formed of boats. The city stands below this point, rising on the converse steep sides of a granite hill, and with its numerous church-steeples, its tinted-walled houses, its bright red roofs interspersed with the polished green of orange-trees in its gardens, is a very picturesque city. Along its quays are arranged vessels of various sizes, chiefly Portuguese or Brazilians,

those of other nations anchoring on the other side, in the stream, to be away from the temptations of its wine-shops. On the south side is a bay with gently sloping shores; and here are found the long, low, narrow lodges in which are stowed the casks of Port wine, which has perhaps made Portugal and the Portuguese more generally known to Englishmen of all classes than would have been done by the historical associations connected with that beautiful country.

As Bubble's friend was on his way to visit his wine-pipes, he took us first to Villa Nova, the place I have been speaking of. One lodge he showed us contained three thousand pipes, ranged in long lines, two and three pipes one above another, which, at fifty pounds a pipe, represents a capital of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. Some of the English houses are said to have two or three times that quantity; but of course the young wine is not of the value I have mentioned. The Port wine is grown on the banks of the Douro, in a district commencing about fifty miles above the city. It is made in the autumn, and remains in large vats on the farms till the spring, when it is put into casks and brought down in flat-bottomed boats to the lodges at Villa Nova. Here it is racked and lotted to get rid of impurities, and has brandy put to it to keep it. Our friend assured us

that Port wine will not keep for any length of time without brandy; the experiment has been tried over and over again. The only way to make it keep for a short time is to rack it constantly; but then it becomes spiritless, vapid, and colourless. To one conclusion we came, that Port wine in the lodge at Villa Nova, and Port wine out of decanter at an English dinner-table are very different things; for Port wine racked and lotted for the English market, and kept some years in a temperate cellar, is undoubtedly vastly superior to the juice of the grape before it is so prepared.

Having satisfied our curiosity, with our friend as guide, we crossed the river to Oporto. We landed at a gateway in the brown old wall of the city, which runs along the river and up the hill to the east and west, surmounted by high pointed battlements of a very Moorish appearance, though the Moors did not plant their conquering standard so far north as Oporto. Passing along a very narrow, cool, dirty, and somewhat odoriferous street, we entered a wide, well-paved one, called the Rua Nova. In the middle of it congregate the merchants every afternoon, at the exchange hour, to transact their public business. At the end of the street is a fine stone building, called the Factory House, a sort of club belonging to the English, who

become members by election. High above the end of the street, on a hill covered with houses, rises the old cathedral of Oporto; we found our way to it along some narrow twisting streets, with oriental-looking shops on either side—tinmen, and goldsmiths, and shoemakers, and stationers—a line of each sort together. The cathedral, as well as all the churches we saw at Oporto were rather curious than elegant.

For the greater part of our walk we were continually ascending along tolerably well-paved and clean streets, with stone houses and wide projecting balconies, some with stone, others with iron, balustrades. We passed through a street called the Street of Flowers; the chief shops in it were those of jewellers, who showed us some very beautiful filigree work in gold—broaches, and earrings, and rings. We next found ourselves in a square at the bottom of two hills, with wide streets running up each of them, and a church at their higher ends. One has a curious arabesque tower, of great height, which we saw a long way out at sea, called the Torre dos Clerigos. Going up still higher we reached a large parade ground, with barracks at one end, and near them a granite-fronted church, called the Lappa, where, in an urn, is preserved the heart of the heroic Dom Pedro—the grandfather of the present king of Portugal. Oporto

is full of gardens, which make the city spread over a wide extent of ground; we were agreeably surprised with its bright, clean, cheerful look. Built on a succession of granite hills, which afford admirable materials for the construction of its edifices, it has a substantial, comfortable look; it is also tolerably well drained, and wayfarers are not much offended with either bad sights or smells. The variety of the costume of the inhabitants gives it a lively look—for although gentlemen and ladies have taken to French fashions, the townspeople still generally wear the graceful black mantilla, or coloured or white handkerchief over their heads, while the peasantry appear with broad-brimmed hats and cloth jackets, gay-coloured petticoats and a profusion of gold earrings and chains. There are beggars, but they are not very importunate, and the smallest copper coin seemed to satisfy them. Our friend told us that he has seen a Portuguese gentleman, wanting a copper, take his snuff-box and present it to a beggar, who would take a pinch with the air of a noble, and shower a thousand blessings on the head of the donor in return. "The truth is that the Portuguese as a nation are the kindest people I have ever met," observed our friend; "they think charitably and act charitably, and do not despise each other; they are kindly affectionate one to another.

A good government and a reformed church would make them a very happy people."

Our walk through the city was a hurried one, as we wished to be on board again before dark. We passed near a large palace with some ugly visages garnishing the front; here Dom Pedro lived, and here Marshal Soult's dinner had been prepared, when the Duke of Wellington entered the city and ate it up. We found a boat ready to carry us down the river, which we reached by a steep winding road. Our friend kindly insisted on accompanying us.

At Foz a catria was prepared by our friend's directions to put us on board the yacht. Oh, how refreshing to our olfactory senses, after the hot air of the streets, was the fresh sea-breeze as we reached the mouth of the river, and once more floated on the blue Atlantic! The sun descended beneath the far western wave in a blaze of glory, such as I have seldom seen equalled in any latitude; the glow lit up the Lappa church, the Clerigos tower, and the Sierra convent in the distance, suffusing a rich glow over the whole landscape. All sail was set, but we made little way through the water; a calm succeeded, and then the hot night wind came off the land in fitful gusts, smelling of parched earth and dry leaves. Having stood off the land sufficiently to clear every

danger, we kept our course. The night was somewhat dark, and we had all turned in, leaving the mate in charge of the watch.

I know not what it was made me restless and inclined to turn out, and breathe the fresher air on deck; probably I was heated with the long and exciting excursion of the day. As I put my head up the companion-hatch, sailor-fashion, I turned my eyes towards every point of the compass. Did they deceive me? "Hallo, Sleet, what's that?" I exclaimed. "Port the helm; hard aport, or we shall be run into." What was the look-out about? Where were Sleet's eyes? All, I suspect, were asleep. There, directly ahead of us, like some huge phantom of a disordered dream, came gliding on a line-of-battle ship, her tall masts and wide-spreading canvas towering up into the sky—a dark pyramid high above our heads; our destruction seemed inevitable. With a hail which horror made sound more like a shriek of despair, I summoned all hands on deck. Happily, the man at the helm of the yacht obeyed my orders at the moment, and the agile little craft slipped out of the way as the huge monster glided by, her side almost touching our tarffail, and her lower studden-sail booms just passing over our peak—so it seemed; our topmast, I know, had a narrow squeak for it.

"What ship's that?" shouted Porpoise, springing on deck.

"Her Britannic Majesty's ship 'Megatherium,'" so the name sounded.

"Then let a better look-out be kept aboard her Britannic Majesty's ship 'Megatherium,' in future; or the Duke of Blow-you-up will have to report you to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty," replied Porpoise, through the speaking-trumpet. "I hauled in the duke just to frighten them a bit," he added; "they wouldn't care for the plain master. The chances are that some of the look-outs had their eyes shut, and the officer of the watch had gone to freshen his nip a bit. No one dreams of danger on a fine night like this, and if a few small fishing-boats had been run down, no one would have heard anything about it; there would be just a cry and a shriek from the drowning people, and all would be over. There's more danger of being run down on a calm night like this than in a gale of wind, when everybody has his eyes open."

"What cutter is that?" hailed some on board the ship, through a speaking-trumpet, before Porpoise had done speaking.

"Bow-wow-wow! I leave you to guess," he answered.

By this time the vessels were so far apart that a hail could scarcely be distinguished, and so we separated. I only hope those who deserved a reprimand got it, and that any of my brother-officers, or other sea-going men who read these pages, will take the hint, and have as bright a look-out kept in fine weather as in foul.

CHAPTER XVI.

CINTRA.—THE TAGUS.—LISBON.—CADIZ.—GIBRALTAR.—SANDGATE AGAIN.—OLD FRIENDS.—NEWS OF MY HEROINE.

Two days after our narrow escape, as the rising sun shed his bright rays over the world of waters, we again made the land a little to the northward of the Rock of Lisbon. We could see with our glasses the vast convent and palace of Mafra, built by that debauched devotee, Don John V. He had a notion, not uncommon at the present day, that by rearing edifices of brick and mortar, he might thus create for himself a few stepping-stones towards heaven. The building shows a front of seven hundred feet at least towards the sea, with a lofty portico in the centre, and is capable of quartering all the troops in the kingdom. When monks dwelt there they must have had ample space for exercise.

Soon afterwards we came under the rocky heights of Cintra. They surround a perfect oasis, rising from

the arid plains about Lisbon. Every one knows Cintra on account of its Convention, not over creditable to its executors; its convent cut out of the rock, and lined with cork to keep the old monks warm; and its palace, built by the talented and eccentric Beckford, now a mass of ruins. We just got a glimpse through a break in the rocks of its cork, orange, and citron-groves, surrounded with sweet-scented shrubs.

Passing the bay of Cascaes, a fresh breeze carried us by the white circular Bugio fort, standing on a rock at the mouth of the Tagus, and with a fair tide we ascended the river.

In our company were a number of craft of all sorts, carrying flags of all nations. Iron-moulded and weather-stained Indiamen, and Brazilian ships surrounded by boats full of people, who had come out to welcome relations and friends after a long absence; men-of-war, with their polished sides and snowy, wide-spreading canvas; heavily laden and heavy looking English merchant-brigs, more esteemed for capacity than for speed, like London aldermen; tub-shaped, yellow-sided Dutchmen, laden with cargoes more formidable in appearance than in reality. Instead of being bomb-shells or round shot, proving, on nearer inspection, to be Dutch cheeses, to be dreaded only by those of weak digestion.

Contrasted with the heavy-looking foreign vessels, were the Portuguese rascas, employed chiefly in the coasting trade, with their graceful, high-pointed, lateen sails, sharp bows, and rounded decks, and the native schooners or hiates, with hulls not destitute of beauty, but rigged with masts raking at different angles and gaffs peaked at unequal heights. There were also numberless sloops, and schooners, and boats of various sorts, the most curious being the Lisbon fishing-boat, shaped like a bean-pod, curving up at stem and stern, with a short rounded deck at either end, and a single high lateen sail. A pilot whom we received on board off the Bugio fort took us close to the white tower of Belem, and its Gothic church at the western end of Lisbon, and brought us to an anchor among a crowd of other vessels off Blackhorse Square. Lisbon rising on several hills from the waters of the wide-flowing Tagus—here many miles across—is noted as a very picturesque city; its white buildings glittering in the sun, crowned by the dark frowning castle, and surrounded by suburbs intermixed with gardens filled with richly tinted orange-trees, and flowers of many hues.

Gold and Silver Streets are handsome streets; and there are some fine palaces, and the Opera House is a respectable edifice, and has, moreover, a very good opera; but though improved of late years, we were

told, in cleanliness, it is still a very dirty city, and the lower orders have a marked inferiority to those we saw at Oporto. They are a darker, smaller race, with much Moorish blood in their veins, without any mixture of the nobler Gothic stream from which the inhabitants of the north have sprung. They are the fellows who have gained for the Portuguese the character of being assassins and robbers, which certainly those in the north do not deserve. However, a strong government, liberal institutions, and a street police, have pretty well put a stop to such proceedings, even there.

The best account I have ever read of Lisbon and its people, as they were before the French revolution changed affairs not a little in most of the countries of Europe, is to be found in Beckford's 'Visit to the Convents of Alcobaça and Batalha,' and in his 'Tour to Italy and Portugal.' There is a rich, racy humour in his descriptions, which has seldom been surpassed. At one of the convents a dance is proposed for the entertainment of the illustrious strangers, and while a few act as musicians, the greater number of the oleaginous obese monks tuck up their frocks and begin sliding and whirling and gliding about with as much gusto as a number of school-girls at play. But we must be off to sea again.

We lionized Lisbon, and paid a visit to Cintra, but as no adventure occurred worthy of note to any of our party, I will not enter into details.

Once more the 'Frolic' breasted the waves of the Atlantic, her course being for fair Cadiz. On the third day after leaving the Tagus we dropped our anchor off that bright smiling city. Its flat-roofed houses give it somewhat of an eastern look, but it is far cleaner than any eastern city. The houses are built after the Moorish fashion, and very like the residences excavated at Pompeii. The colouring of the outside is more in accordance with the taste of the luxurious Romans in the days of their degeneracy, than with that of the ancient Greeks, which made them satisfied with softer hues; while the interior, on the other hand, is as cool and simple as the purest taste can make it. No sooner had we furled sails than all hands were eager to go on shore to have a glimpse at the often talked of mantilla-wearing, fair, flirting, fascinating Gaditanas. The gig was lowered, and on shore we went.

We were not disappointed in the appearance of Cadiz. The streets are narrow, that the sun of that torrid clime may not penetrate into them, and those only who have lived in a southern latitude can appreciate the luxury of having a cool, shady road in which

to walk. Verandahs in front of every window reach nearly half-way overhead; they are closely barred and sometimes glazed, so that no impertinent eye can penetrate their recesses. These verandahs are full of flowers, and overhung with ivy or other luxuriant creepers.

The fronts of the houses are ornamented with various colours, as red, blue, yellow, green, and other tints, while the separation between each house and each floor is marked by lines of red, thus giving the whole street a singularly bright and cheerful appearance.

The gateway is the pride of a Cadiz house. Many we passed were very handsome. It was pleasant to look through them into the interior where the column-surrounded patios with cool, sparkling fountains in their centres, and shrubs and flowers of every hue, were indeed most refreshing to the senses. Every house is a square, with one or more patios in the centre, their only roof the bright blue sky. Into this court of columns all the rooms of the house open. Shade and coolness are the great things sought for in that clime.

We wandered up and down the narrow streets till we began to wish that some one would take compassion on us and ask us in; but nobody did, and our only satisfaction was the belief that we created a mighty

sensation in the bosoms of numberless lovely damsels whose bright eyes we saw flashing at us through the thickly barred jalouses.

"Ah, my good fellows, but you did not see their small noses, thick lips, and swarthy skins," observed that unsentimental fellow, Bubble, thus cruelly depriving us of the only consolation we enjoyed. The fact was, that at that early hour of the day no one goes abroad who can stay at home, except, as the Spaniards say, dogs and Englishmen, putting the canine tribe before the biped. Fatigue drove us into a café, where we took some refreshment, and in the evening we were somewhat repaid by watching the crowds of bewitching damsels and gay cavaliers, who sauntered forth to enjoy the cool air, and each other's conversation.

Cadiz is joined to the mainland by a narrow strip of sand, deprived of which it would be an island. Opposite to it, across the bay, is Port St. Mary's, the port of Xeres, where the sherry wine is embarked.

The next day we visited that place to taste some of its celebrated wines. We were much captivated with some deliciously dry Mansanilla, inferior as it is in flavour, however, to the still more valuable Amontillado.

But interesting as was our visit to Cadiz to ourselves, attractive as were its far-famed dames, and

delicious as were its wines, my readers will undoubtedly rather hear some of the more stirring events of our cruise.

Away, away, once more we went, bounding over the blue ocean. We were, however, destined not to find ourselves so soon inside the Mediterranean as we expected. A dead calm came on, and for many hours we lay sweltering under a sun not much less fierce than that of the tropics.

It was very tantalizing to remain thus almost in sight of the entrance of that classic sea we all wished to behold, and yet not to be able to get there. Once within the influence of that strange current which from age to age has unweariedly flowed into that mighty basin, and yet never has filled it, we should have advanced with sufficient rapidity. Another whole day tried our patience, and Hearty had begun to declare that, after all, he thought the Mediterranean could not be worth visiting, when, on the morning of the third day, a breeze sprung up, and the cutter began to slip through the water towards the straits.

The chief strength of the current is in the centre, far out of reach of shot and shell from the shore on either side. I mention this because many people have a notion that the fortress of Gibraltar defends the

entrance to the Straits. The fact is, that the narrowest part is seven and a quarter miles wide; but that narrowest part we passed through at a distance of fifteen miles from Gibraltar, before we reached it. We did not, indeed, see the Rock before we had passed the Narrows.

The distance from the Rock to Ceuta, opposite to it on the African coast, is twelve miles.

Gibraltar is formed by a tongue of land three miles long, and one broad, with a sandbank joining it to the main, and terminating with a high promontory. No one ever expected to make it defend the Straits, even before steamers were introduced. The heaviest guns are turned towards Spain; at the same time the sea-side is made inaccessible by scarping. Below the Rock is a belt of level land, on which the modern town is built. The Rock has the form of a lofty ridge with three elevations on it, one at each end, and one in the centre. That in the centre is the highest, and has the flag-staff planted on it. When we landed, we went through the wonderful galleries excavated in the rock. These excavations have been going on since the time of the Moors, who, I believe, made by far the largest number of them.

They were wonderful fellows, those Moors. I have always felt a vast respect for them when I have beheld

their remains in the south of Spain. The reason of their success is, that they were always in earnest in whatever they undertook. However, I don't want to talk here about the Moors. Gibraltar is a very curious place, and well worth a visit; with its excavated galleries, its heavy guns, its outward fortifications, its zig-zag roads, its towers and batteries, its narrow streets, its crowded houses, its ragged rocks, and its troops of monkeys, the only specimens of the family of simia which reside, I believe, in a wild state in Europe. Gibraltar, in reality, from its geological formation, belongs rather to Africa than to Europe, it being evidently cut off from the African mountains, and having no connection with those of Europe.

It is a question for naturalists to solve how the monkeys came there—I don't pretend to do so. We brought up in Gibraltar bay, where the yacht lay very comfortably, and so do now our men-of-war. Should, however, a war break out with Spain, they would find the place too hot to hold them, as the bay is completely commanded by the Spanish coast, where batteries could speedily be erected, nor could the Rock afford the ships any protection.

Now I have talked enough about Gibraltar; I'll however just describe it, like a big tadpole caught by the tail as it was darting away towards Africa. We

spent some pleasant days there, and were very hospitably treated by some military friends in the garrison. Malta, the Isles of Greece, and the Levant, was our destination. I did not fail to make inquiries respecting Sandgate; and, curious enough, I fell in with a merchant who had in his youth fought in the Greek war of independence. He told me that a youth of that name, and who in every way answered Sandgate's description, had come out from England and joined the patriot forces. He was a brave, dashing fellow, but most troublesome from his unwillingness to submit to any of the necessary restraints of discipline, and utterly unprincipled. He had, however, plenty of talent, and managed to ingratiate himself with some of the Greek chiefs, though the more respectable, as did the English Philhellenes, stood aloof from him.

"The truth is," said my friend, "many of those Greek chiefs had been notorious pirates themselves, and I have no doubt Sandgate learned his trade from them."

"I suspect very strongly that the man you describe and Sandgate are one and the same person," I remarked. "It is curious that I should so soon have gained a clue to him."

The next day I again met my friend. "I have some further account of Sandgate to give you," said he,

taking me by the button; "he'll give some little trouble before his career is closed, I suspect. My Smyrna correspondent is here, and he tells me that he knew of Sandgate's being there, and of his selling his yacht. He served with me in the war, and knew him also: consequently, when he made his appearance he kept his eye upon him. He traced him on board a vessel, in which he went to one of the Greek islands. From thence he crossed to a smaller island owned by a chief who had once been a notorious pirate, and was strongly suspected of still following the same trade in a more quiet way. There he lost sight of him; but several piracies had been committed during the spring by a craft which it was suspected had been fitted out in the island in question."

"We certainly have in a most unexpected way discovered a clue to Mr. Sandgate's whereabouts and course of life," I remarked. "It would almost read like a romance were it to be put into print."

"Oh, we have had many heroes of that description from time to time in the Mediterranean," replied my friend. "There was that fellow Delano, who was hung at Malta a few years back, he was an Englishman—or a Yankee, I believe rather. How many piracies he had committed I do not know before he was found out, but at last he tried to scuttle a brig, which did not go

down as he thought she had, so happily his intended victims escaped and informed against him. He was captured by a man-of-war's boat's crew, and he and his followers were carried in chains to Malta. Then there was a very daring fellow, a Greek, Zappa by name, who commanded a brig, and on one occasion attacked an Austrian man-of-war which he believed had treasure on board, and took her. Then there has been no end of Greek pirates of high and low degree. Gentlemanly cut-throats, princes and counts with fleets under their command, down to the disreputable owners of small boats which lie in wait behind headlands to rob unwary merchantmen who cannot defend themselves. Oh! the Mediterranean has reason to be proud of the achievements of its mariners from the times of the pious Æneas down to the present day."

From all I heard of Sandgate, indeed, I felt more and more thankful that Miss Manners had so fortunately escaped from his power.

Nothing worthy of note occurred to us during our very pleasant stay at Gibraltar. The day before we had arranged to leave the place, who should we fall in with but Jack Piper, a lieutenant in the navy, and a friend and old messmate of Tom Mizen's. "Why, I thought we had left you at Plymouth!" I exclaimed as I wrung his hand.

"So you did," he answered; "but I had been ordered to come out here and to join my ship. You know old Rullock, Mizen's uncle. He had just before commissioned the 'Zebra' brig, for this station, and as she was the first vessel to sail, I got a passage in her. We had a fast run, and they only put me on shore here yesterday while she has gone to Malta. We had Mrs. and Miss Mizen on board, and Mrs. Mizen's niece, Miss Susan Simms" (Jack, I knew, rather affected Miss Susan, and he looked very conscious as he mentioned her name). "Very nice girl," he continued; "so kind of her, too, to come out just at an hour's notice to take care of her cousin, Miss Rullock, you know. You haven't heard, perhaps, that they are rather alarmed about Miss Laura. Caught a cold, somewhat ugly symptoms. Think her consumptive, so it was judged best to bring her out to spend a winter at Malta, and as her uncle was coming, the opportunity was a good one."

"Ah! this news will be matter of interest to Hearty," thought I. "We shall now see whether his feelings for Miss Mizen had any root, or whether he was affected by a mere passing fancy."

"Poor girl! I am sorry to hear of her illness," said I, aloud. "Malta is as good a place as she could come to, and I hope the change will do her good.

We shall see her there, I dare say. Have you any commands for the ladies?"

"Say I hope that my ship will be there before long," answered Piper, absolutely blushing through the well-bronzed hue of his cheek.

He had been appointed as first-lieutenant of the 'Thunder,' sloop of war. She was expected at the Rock every day. Jack Piper was not very dissimilar in appearance and manner to Porpoise, and he was the same sort of good-natured, frank, open-hearted fellow —just the man to do a gallant, noble action, and not to say a word about it, simply because it would not occur to him that it was anything out of the way. There are plenty of such men in the service, and England may be proud of them.

On quitting Piper I went on board the yacht, where we had agreed to assemble in the evening, to be ready for a start by daybreak. Should Hearty not have heard of the 'Zebra's' touching at the Rock, I resolved to say nothing about the matter. If he really was in love with Miss Mizen, I might chance to spoil him as a companion, and if he did not care about her, there was no harm done.

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